



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



3 3433 06182711 3



BGD
MARSHALL



BGD
MARSHALL



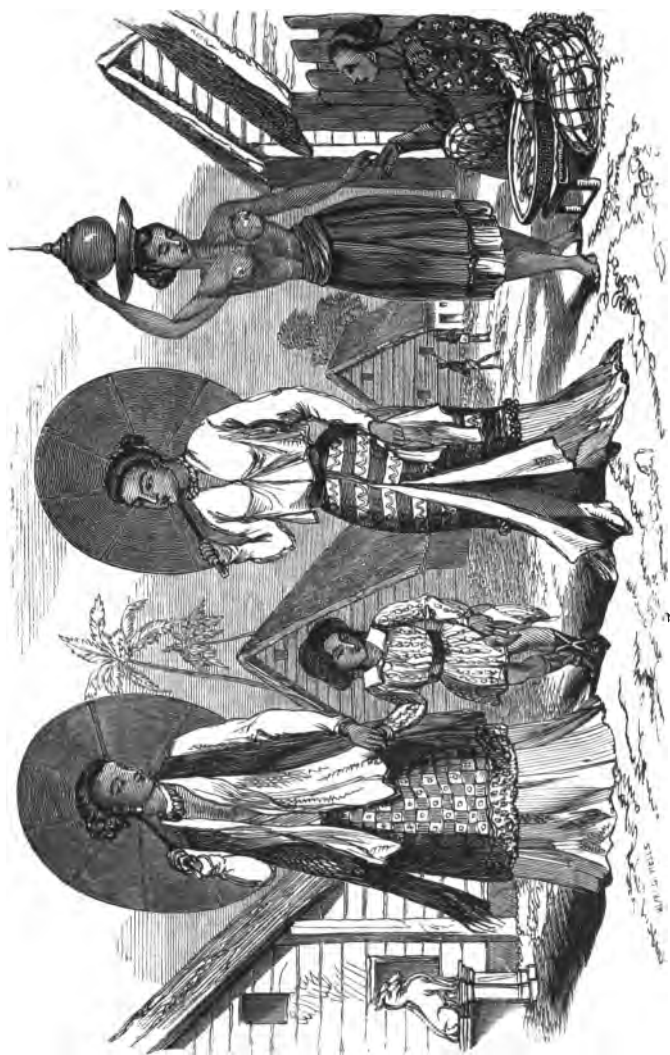
.

.

-

-1





BURMESE COSTUMES.—MOULMEIN.

FOUR YEARS IN BURMAH.

BY

W. H. MARSHALL, Esq.,

LATE EDITOR OF THE "RANGOON CHRONICLE."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

CHARLES J. SKEET, PUBLISHER,

10, KING WILLIAM STREET,

CHANCERY CROSS.

1860. H,

- 22552 -



P R E F A C E.

THE circumstances under which the present Work appears before the public will be found partially explained in the opening chapter. The greater portion of the matter submitted was written in Burmah, and treats almost entirely of what came under my own observation during a four years' residence in the Tenasserim provinces and Rangoon.

At any other time, perhaps, the following pages would only be perused by the scholar-desirous of general knowledge, or the idle reader who is indifferent as to the quality of the pabulum provided by his librarian, so that it be miscellaneous; but circumstances have now arisen to excite public curiosity regard-

ing the Burmese Empire, in common with all countries adjacent to our own possessions which are contiguous to China; and that curiosity will increase daily.

The French are evidently desirous of obtaining a footing in India;—they have waged an unsuccessful war with Cochin China;—their emissary occupies an important position at Ava;—their troops have been operating in the Chinese waters,—and there is every reason to believe that they will again be found asserting the dignity of the tricolour before the walls of Peking. It is true, that their next movement must be associated with the union flag of *perfidious Albion*; but who can foresee what complications may arise out of the ill-assorted alliance? Who can tell that, after forcing submission from the Celestials, the arms of France may not be turned against Cochin China, as a step towards that acquisition of territory in the south of Burmah which is evidently the object of Imperial

ambition? When that contingency arrives,—and it is neither remote nor improbable,—a close knowledge of the people of Burmah, the nature and aspect of the country and its resources, and the probable advantages derivable from our connection with a large section of the country, may not be altogether undesirable, and if my humble endeavours should happen to induce any additional public interest upon those subjects, I shall not have written in vain.

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

CHAPTER I.

Sketch of the History of Burmah—War with the Burmese in 1824—Conquered by the British— Negociations with the Court of Ava—Occupation of the Tenasserim Provinces in 1851— Naval Expedition to Ava—Arrival in Burmah in 1854	page 1
--	--------

CHAPTER II.

How I came to go to Burmah — Captain Biden — Voyage in the “Hugh Lindsay” — Masulipatam — Coringa — The Temples of Juggernathpooram—Nautch Girls—Vizagapatam —Munsuorcottah—A shooting party ashore . .	64
---	----

CHAPTER III.

Description of the Town of Maulmain and its En- vironments—Picturesque Population—Domestic Man- ners of the People—Costumes, &c.	99
--	----

CHAPTER IV.

My Burmese Preceptor—Intercourse between Eu- ropeans and Burmese Women—Plays and Enter- tainments—Curious Customs and Amusements— Traditions—Creation of the World—Missionaries —Education of Youth	121
---	-----

CHAPTER V.

Account of the Great Fire at Maulmain in 1854—	
Other Fires	page 151

CHAPTER VI.

Description of my house—Domestic servants—	
Marketing—The Bazaar—Articles of food—	
Prejudices of the people—Cloth merchants—	
Extortionate shop-keepers	168

CHAPTER VII.

Law and Police Courts—Magistrates and Judges—	
Pleaders—Affrays and Police Proceedings—	
Chinese Passion for Play—Gambling Houses—	
Heavy punishment and fines—Punishment of a	
criminal.—Law processes—Delay in adminis-	
tering justice	199

CHAPTER VIII.

Voyage to Rangoon in the “Nemesis”—Amherst,	
on the Salween River—The Irrawaddy—Im-	
mense alligator—Animals and insects—Mos-	
quito creek—Miseries on arriving at Rangoon—	
State of affairs there—Journey to the house of	
Mr. L.—Generous hospitality—Wretched	
dwelling—Burmese boat races—Accommoda-	
tions for the spectators—Animated description	
of the race—A Burmese drama—Dancing girls—	
Curious scene—Wrestling matches—Extraordi-	
nary climate—Excursions about the town—The	
Great Pagoda described—A fearful prospect—	
Return to Maulmain	240

FOUR YEARS IN BURMAH.

CHAPTER I.

Sketch of the History of Burmah—War with the Burmese in 1824—Conquered by the British—Negotiations with the Court of Ava—Occupation of the Tenasserim Provinces in 1851—Naval expedition to Ava—Arrival in Burmah in 1854.

A VERY voluminous mass of papers, containing, chiefly, memoranda and minutes of various objects, proceedings, correspondence, and general experiences seen, done, written, and acquired, during a residence of upwards of four years in Burmah, having turned out of a teak wood trunk of mine, which I emptied during my

voyage home from Maulmain, I thought I could not better employ my time than by endeavouring to arrange them for publication, believing, that amongst them were a number of facts to be found relating to a large and interesting tract of territory, which has, for about three and thirty years, been annexed by conquest to our Eastern Empire, and illustrative of some of the manners, characteristics, and customs, of the people who inhabit those regions, which were calculated, to some extent, to interest and amuse a good many people out of the circle of my own acquaintances. When I quitted that part of our Eastern dominions, the aspect of affairs in our Indian dependencies was engrossing a considerable amount of public attention, and important questions regarding their future government were then under the consideration of the legislature. Very much of that excitement has long since subsided ; many of those grave questions have been definitively disposed of ; the administration of British India is exclusively

vested in the crown ; and now, possibly, such of those as take an interest regarding oriental affairs, may find leisure to read, and may derive some information and entertainment, from a perusal of the following pages.

Since the year 1826, the importance of our Burmese possessions has so rapidly and materially increased, that it is a matter of some surprise that more has not been written concerning them than has, as yet, appeared ; for, beyond a few newspaper descriptions of certain places and particular events, furnished at intervals by occasional correspondents, during seasons of unusual local excitement, I believe very little has been generally made known relative to their present condition, or future prospects, or the aspect of society, as it exists in the principal settlements. I may, perhaps, therefore, be allowed to recapitulate some of the most important political events which have led gradually to the occupation by the British of that portion of the kingdom of Burmah which comprises the pro-

vinces of Arracan, Bassein, Pegu, Martaban, and Tenasserim—indeed, the whole sea-board from Arracan to Mergui inclusive. By thus assisting the reader's recollection, I may better enable him to understand the position which we at present hold in relation to these acquisitions, and to appreciate the descriptions, comprehend the observations, and relish the anecdotes, of which I have made memoranda in diaries and note-books, kept by myself during my residence in the country, as well as the information upon various subjects of interest as regards important localities, which I have derived from other writers.

Previous to the year 1796, very little was known of Burmah, her people, or her government. The East India Company would seem then to have entertained some desire to become acquainted with her resources, and to maintain an amicable relationship with this comparatively barbarous nation ; for we find, on reference to some old Gazettes, that Colonel Symes was accredited to Ava, as the ambassador of the

government of Fort William, and returned to Calcutta from his embassy in December of that year, well informed (as we learn from other sources) in regard to general details concerning the institutions of the country, her natural products, and the system of administration obtaining there. Further than this, his mission did not result immediately in anything of material importance ; but it had the effect of apprising the court of Ava, that a great and powerful government claimed to be next-door neighbour to him of the Golden Foot, the White Elephants, and the numerous umbrellas, and that the British merchant princes of India were quite agreeable to trade in a friendly way to the mutual advantage of themselves and the Burmese. Trade, under certain conditions, and subject to various restrictions, was opened. Rangoon, on the Irrawaddy, was considered a safe and favorable port for the purposes of traffic, and thither such vessels as were intended to trade in the produce of the country were generally bound.

The Burmese authorities, however, did not seem much to relish the intercourse thus introduced, and it would appear that very little encouragement was held out to European speculators to increase their commercial transactions with Burmah, to any degree of importance. The Burmese officials were arrogant and exacting, and as it was obviously necessary for foreign traders resorting to Rangoon to comply with the mandates dictated by the authorities, these were occasionally made so unreasonable, and the penalties enforced for disobedience were generally so severe, that few desired to incur risk in negotiating matters of business with a government apparently so jealous of us ; so reluctant to meet us upon equal terms, and so dishonest and exacting when they did condescend to deal with us.

The system of government then pursued in Burmah was also calculated to retard commercial enterprise, and to prevent the development of the natural resources of an extensive

and fertile country. Men were placed in charge of certain districts or provinces, as governors or factors, and these functionaries had to pay themselves and their respective establishments, as well as to comply with the pecuniary demands of the court of Ava, out of the revenues derived from the districts under their several jurisdictions. The consequence was, that the people in some of the provinces were subjected to the most grinding impositions. Cultivators derived no advantage from their labour in a good many instances, for their profits were often sacrificed to the rapacity of their immediate rulers. In some parts of the kingdom governed by the least avaricious of the monarch's nominees, comparative contentment prevailed amongst the peasantry, but by far the larger portion of the population groaned under the most tyrannous oppression.

The large district or province of Chittagong, belonging to the British government, immediately joins the province of Arracan, which

was (prior to the treaty of Yandaboo) under Burmese rule, and it would seem that the Burmese governors of the latter province were particularly harsh in the levying of contributions from the inhabitants. Such of them as were located near the frontier of the British territory, doubtless saw and appreciated the improved condition of their neighbours, and ultimately, driven to extremities by reason of the heavy burdens imposed upon them, they left their country in multitudes, and established themselves under the East India Company's government. The jealousy and anger of the king and his ministers were aroused at this systematic exodus; the court was fairly exasperated, and an army of four thousand men was forthwith despatched in pursuit of the fugitives.

Sixty years ago, the affairs of the provinces subordinate to the Bengal Presidency were, of necessity, but very imperfectly administered. The territories which had recently been acquired after a succession of arduous and expensive

struggles, were governed by a legislature yet in its infancy, upon principles which the million had, as yet, scarcely had time to understand and appreciate. A district so remote from the seat of government as Chittagong, at a time when steam-vessels were unknown in the distant Indian seas, had but limited means at disposal to spare for the protection of the Burmese refugees, who emigrated thither in such numbers, even if a rupture with Burmah had been at that time at all desirable. The royal party were, however, the aggressors. With their four thousand men, they invaded our territory, with a view to recapture the Arracanese, who had fled from their thralldom. But these men had been goaded into desperation; they knew that to be recaptured by their oppressors, was to be consigned to the torture and a cruel death; and they also knew that their women and families would either be made to share their fate, or linger out a life of degradation and slavery. They preferred death in battle, and determined

that their defeat should be accomplished only at the sacrifice of their lives. On the other hand, the majority of those who composed the king's army, were men who suffered to no little extent from causes identical with those which urged the Arracanese to fly from their country, and who could therefore have had little sympathy for the cause for which they were required to do battle.. They were besides, ruled under a system similar to that which obtained in Christendom in feudal times, each chieftain furnishing a certain number of his vassals to serve under him in the fight. Their mode of warfare too, was desultory. They rarely ventured upon a pitched battle on an open plain, but resorted to an irregular system of ambuscading and occasional skirmishing in the jungle, and on the passes and in the defiles of the mountains. The four thousand men found the object of their expedition, however, somewhat difficult of attainment ; in fact, a failure. They remained in the province nevertheless, making themselves ex-

ceedingly troublesome visitors, and finally a letter (the tenor of which was excessively arrogant and menacing) was addressed to the magistrate of Chittagong, demanding, in the name of the King of Burmah, that the fugitives should be given up, and that in case of refusal, an invasion of a more extensive and formidable nature would follow. The magistrate's reply was temperate, dignified, and firm. It was to the effect, that the British government were not desirous of involving themselves in hostilities with Burmah, but they would not suffer themselves to be dictated to in that sort of manner; and that so long as the Burmese army remained within British territory, no negotiation could be effected. This brought matters to a crisis. The Burmese endeavoured to maintain their position. A British force was sent to expel them. They resisted bravely for a time, but were ultimately defeated, and, wearied at length with a fruitless contest, they returned to their country. This little misunderstanding occurred

in 1799. The causes of the quarrel and the eventual result serve, to some extent, to justify the inference, that the mass of the people were completely subject to the caprice of the few, and to demonstrate how little affection for the government, under which they had suffered, was felt by the fugitives themselves, or was likely to be entertained by the majority of those who marched in the ranks of the pursuers.

For twelve years after the occurrences above narrated, there was peace between the British and the Burmese powers ; and if intimate relations could not subsist between them, at least matters were suffered to go on pretty smoothly and quietly. In 1811 however, a turbulent subject of Minderajee Praw, the Burmese king, named Berhing, a feudal chieftain, who had risen to wealth and influence, and who commanded a large number of retainers, became dangerous to the state. It was deemed necessary to deprive him of his possessions in order to prevent him from working mischief, especially

as he had already set up claims to the title of sovereignty; and measures were accordingly adopted which were effectual in compassing that object. Berhing was obliged to fly from his country, and he chose Chittagong as his place of refuge. His restless and ambitious spirit, however, would not suffer him to remain passive in his exile, and he determined to make a bold stroke for the recovery of his former power and affluence. There were many disaffected Burmese subjects still suffering from the effects of misgovernment in Arracan. These were soon induced to join their compatriots, who had already emigrated to Chittagong, and to enlist themselves under Berhing's standard. Having succeeded in raising a considerable force to aid him in his projects, Berhing concerted plans for the invasion of the whole province of Arracan, of which he claimed to be king. The Burmese were unprepared to oppose effectually this unexpected incursion, at the outset, and the consequence of the surprise was, that Berhing

met with a series of signal successes, the capital alone being in a position to offer formidable resistance to the rebel force. An army was, however, soon collected by the loyalists, and, in various engagements, Berhing and his army sustained some mortifying reverses.

As this formidable rebellion had been organized in the province of Chittagong, from whence, too, the invading army had proceeded into Aracan; it is, perhaps, not surprising that the Burmese authorities should have attributed blame to the British for allowing an outlawed rebel from Burmah to mature his treasonous plans in their territory, and to form an army to proceed against a neighbouring state with their cognizance; and—as it was not unreasonable for the Court of Ava to suppose—with their connivance. It was impossible for the Burman monarch, or his ministers, to be acquainted with the nature of our resources in that part of the British possessions at that time, and how inadequate were the means at our disposal to

enforce preventive measures against Berhing's proceedings. The British government saw the difficulty in which it had accidentally become involved with Burmah, and adopted the only course open to them to remove any unfavourable impression which recent events might have created at the Court of Ava. Captain Canning was deputed to proceed to the capital to vindicate his government against all suspicion of complicity in the proceedings of the rebels, or of having countenanced them in any way. But it was evident that mistrust had been already excited as to our intentions in regard to Burmah. Intelligence of some of our military achievements in India had probably reached Ava through the reports of travellers and merchants, and, no doubt, it was considered by the Burmese king and his council the wisest policy to have as little to do with the British as possible, but at all events to render their empire safe from further aggression as far as it was practicable to do so. Rude and ignorant as were

this people, they knew nothing] of the etiquette of Western diplomacy, and conceived probably that the most effectual method of preventing all further intercourse with a power which they already regarded with jealous distrust and apprehension would be to slight and discountenance the ambassador. They even meditated the detention of Captain Canning as a hostage until the insurgent Arracanese, or Klings, were delivered up to the Burmese authorities; and apprehensive, as he had reason to be, that his liberty would be imperilled if he prolonged his visit, that officer quitted Burmah for Calcutta in 1812. Berhing (deserted by all his followers) died in 1815.

Seven years passed away since this second disagreement, and, year after year, new progress had been made towards the consolidation of our empire in the East. The conciliatory policy that had hitherto been adopted by the Company's government in respect to Burmah, so far from serving the desired end, appeared to af-

ford encouragement to the Court of Ava and the heads of the provincial districts in the insolence of their demeanour towards us. A letter which purported to be addressed, by instruction of the King of Ava, to the Marquis of Hastings, then Governor-General of India, contained a demand for the cession of Chittagong, Ramoo, Moorshedabad, and Dacca. To this modest requisition, which was made through the medium of the Rajah of Ramree, a sort of viceroy over an island of that name off the coast of Arracan, and lord of some border jaghires, we find, by a Despatch from Fort William, dated 17th March, 1820, the Governor-General replied to the effect, "that if the letter he had received had really been written by order of the King of Ava, his Excellency lamented that persons so incompetent to form a just notion of the power of the British nation in India, should have been able to practise upon the king's judgment; that any hope which they might have been induced to enter-

tain that the British Government would be embarrassed by contests in other quarters, were entirely delusive; that we were indifferent to attack from the King of Ava, further than as we should regard with concern the waste of lives in an unmeaning quarrel; that his Excellency trusted, however, that the king would perceive the folly of the counsellors who would plunge him into a calamitous war, by which the commerce of his empire would be wholly destroyed; and that if, as the Governor-General could not but believe, the Rajah of Ramree had, for some unworthy purpose of his own, assumed the tone of insolence and menace exhibited in his letter, without the authority of the king, he hoped that a procedure so calculated to breed dissension between two friendly states, would be visited by the king with the severe displeasure which it deserved."

Matters remained then in statu quo for some time. Minderajee Praw was dead before the Governor-General's despatch reached Ava.

Prince Tharawaddy had been crowned king in November of the previous year, and hopes were entertained that the policy which he would maintain, in his relations towards the British Government, would be of a more conciliatory and pacific character than that manifested by his predecessor during the latter period of his long reign.

But these hopes were destined to be soon dispelled; Tharawaddy exhibited his antipathy towards our government on every available occasion, and neglected no opportunity of displaying his arrogance and presumption. Shortly after his accession (in 1821), a considerable military force being in Assam, a Burman general, in high repute for his bravery and skill, named Maha Bundoola, was sent by his majesty of the Golden Foot to take command of his troops there, and to apprehend the Ex-Rajah of Assam, who had taken refuge in our territories. The surrender of the fugitive was demanded of the British authorities, with an intimation that

if the person of the Ex-Rajah were not forthwith delivered up to Maha Bundoola, that chieftain would accomplish his capture by force. Every honourable effort was made to arrange matters amicably between the two powers, and for a time, at least, overt demonstrations of hostility ceased. The dislike with which we were regarded by the Burmese government was, however, apparently unreconcilable; and it soon became manifest that nothing would appease them but the infliction of severe and effectual chastisement. The new king probably considered it impossible for any power to cope advantageously with the military host he could bring into the field. He could levy troops in every quarter of his large empire, and the aspect of the country, he conceived, secured him against any danger from successful invasion. But King Tharawaddy had hitherto learned nothing of the art military. His ideas of warfare were limited to jungle operations, desultory skirmishing, ambuscading; and all he knew of

the science of fortification consisted in the erection and occupation of wooden stockades. He was able to collect a large army, but neither himself nor his generals knew how to organize it. Their families were hostages for those who were pressed into the service, and their property was held pledged to the state, in earnest of their determination to conquer or die. The services of every subject capable of bearing arms in furtherance of the end desired were liable to be demanded, and, with the majority, enlistment was compulsory. With such appliances and means as they had at command, the Burmese, at length, determined on aggression; and on the 24th September, 1823, the British guard stationed on the island of Shapooree was attacked by a force consisting of six hundred Arracanese troops. The few British soldiers on the spot were completely surprised by this unexpected movement, and several of our men were killed, and a few wounded. A reinforcement, however, soon arrived, and the enemy

were driven from the island with considerable loss. Still our government were slow to punish, and leniency was mistaken by the enemy for weakness. A remonstrance on the subject of the Shapooree outrage was addressed by the Governor-General to the Court of Ava. It was received with insolence and contempt, and no answer was deigned to be returned. Of course it was impossible for us to remain any longer passive under annoyances such as these ; and as the Burnese appeared determined upon being troublesome, it became necessary, for the sake of future peace and quietness, to teach the barbarians a salutary lesson. On the 5th March, 1824, war against Burmah was formally declared, and a powerful force for the expedition was accordingly equipped.

On the 10th of May following the proclamation of hostilities, the British fleet, with the troops on board, and Sir Archibald Campbell as commander of the forces, entered the Irrawaddy ; and on the following day the ships an-

chored off the town of Rangoon, having received little or no molestation on their way up the river. The Burmese were exceedingly astonished at the formidable front presented by us ; indeed, surprise and terror appeared to have paralyzed them. At length, having in some measure rallied from the consternation which our sudden appearance had apparently thrown them into, they commenced a feeble and ill-directed fire upon our ships from an eighteen-gun battery, which was silenced very speedily. Our troops were then safely landed, and in something less than half-an-hour the British flag was flying over the maritime capital of Burmah. The Burmese on the islands of Cheduba and Negrais made a more desperate resistance ; but both these positions in a very short time fell into our hands, and the business of war was fairly commenced under apparently favourable auspices. Well would it have been if the hopes engendered by those first easy successes had been realized throughout the campaign. The victory which eventually crowned our enterprise,

was, however, dearly purchased. We had chosen an ill season for the commencement of our operations, the very first month of the south-west monsoon. The climate and the nature of the country favoured the Burmese to an infinitely greater extent than did their weapons of warfare, their personal bravery and skill, and their apparently overwhelming numbers. Rivers and their tributaries intersect the country, which presents a strangely diversified aspect. The lowlands are for the most part marshy, and during the rainy season, which commences in May and does not terminate until October, malaria occurs, which is calculated to be extremely destructive to the health of foreigners, especially Europeans, owing to the rapid growth of vegetation, and the consequent generation of noxious vapours through the combined influences of heat and damp, the sun being very powerful in those latitudes. Numbers of our troops were laid low on the marshes by *coup de soleil*, and hundreds perished from the effects of cholera and

fever. The rivers and streams were swollen, and in many instances interposed insurmountable obstacles to our progress; the forests (almost impenetrable, and haunted by wild beasts and deadly serpents) offered no less serious impediments, and the mountains precipitous, overgrown with jungle, and covered with dense forests, were almost inaccessible from a combination of antagonistic influences.

Nevertheless, in every engagement we had with the enemy we were successful. Disease had not quenched the spirit of our brave soldiers, and the Burmese hosts were soon made aware that they had no common foe to contend against. In little more than a month after our arrival, before disease had thinned our ranks to any considerable extent, deputies from the enemy's camp visited us, charged with propositions of peace. A discovery was, however, made, that the object of the deputies was to obtain time for the main body of the enemy to strengthen themselves at Kemendine, a village about three miles above

Rangoon ; the pretended negotiations were accordingly abruptly broken off, and a general advance of the British troops was forthwith ordered on the proposed rendezvous, the headquarters of the enemy, which was evacuated by them during the cannonade to which they were treated by us, with a loss to their complement of upwards of two hundred men. Aided by the advantages of their climate, and other natural causes, the Burmese were able to prolong the contest for some time ; but in a few months the rains ceased, the horrors of disease abated, and our men, cheered by the brighter prospects which now opened out before them, were eager and impatient for action. Battles were fought and won, stockades were taken and destroyed by us, the sea coast was ravaged, and important positions were occupied. In every instance the victory was ours, and every day's events must have demonstrated to the enemy the futility of opposition to our arms, and the valour and endurance of our troops. Negrais, Arracan, Martaban,

Rangoon, and important places on the sea coast of Tennasserim, successively succumbed before our prowess ; and, foreseeing probably that a continuance of hostilities would most likely result in the loss of a very large portion (if not the whole) of his empire, the king was at length induced to solicit an amnesty. He cried " Peccavi " with as good a grace as he could assume, considering all the circumstances of the case, and put himself upon British clemency, much of which, it must be confessed, he did not by any means deserve ; for if any potentate in this world ever wantonly provoked a battle, he had done so in this instance to all intents and purposes. Propositions were submitted on both sides, and eventually the treaty of Yandaboo was entered into and duly executed, whereby the Tennasserim provinces, consisting of Amherst, Tavoy, and Mergui, and the province of Arracan, were ceded to us ; and liberty to trade in the Irrawaddy, under certain reasonable stipulations, was also accorded to us. Thus terminated the first Bur-

mese war, and in this manner did the East India Company annex to their dominions some highly important possessions.

Having thus acquired by treaty these valuable provinces, it became necessary to establish some sort of government to meet immediate requirements suitable to the circumstances, and a military commission was accordingly appointed to form a local administration, by way of introduction to the establishment of a regular and efficient system at some future time. It could not be expected, that at the outset of our assumption of power, our plans of arrangement would be suffered to proceed without some attempts at molestation on the part of discontented native chiefs, whose property was now placed in subordination to the power of the East India Company. Many of these men still retained the prestige of authority, and could command numerous followers, who, being inured to a condition of vassalage, knew not, neither had been taught to desire, the advantage of elevation to a state of

comparative independence. In order to suppress any attempts at disturbance, and check every symptom of rebellion on the part of our new subjects, a military force had to be maintained. Courts of summary jurisdiction were essential for the preservation of tranquillity, and a military police, armed with extensive powers, was duly organised.

A small peninsula, situated at the entrance of the Salween river, was selected by Sir Archibald Campbell (who had been nominated by the supreme government Commissioner of the newly-acquired territories) as the head quarters of the army and of the local government, and as the site of the future metropolis of the Tenasserim provinces; he conceiving the locality to be the best adapted for commercial and other purposes. The place was named Amherst, in compliment to the then Governor-General, Lord Amherst. It soon became apparent, however, that this selection was a mistake. Amherst was found to be destitute of almost every advantage. As a

port for shipping, it was found to be ineligible, the roadstead affording little or no security against the occasional violence of the south-west monsoon. It was therefore deemed expedient to remove the seat of authority higher up the river before any considerable injudicious outlay had been expended upon Amherst; and Maulmain, a town situated about twenty-seven miles from Amherst, on the east shore of the river, a locality the natural features of which rendered it particularly well adapted for the purpose intended, was chosen as the capital, which has since risen into an important commercial port, the trade of which is now rapidly increasing.

We were now, to all intents and purposes, in possession, and it became politic to attach to our rule as many of those native landholders as were well disposed towards us, and to conciliate such as appeared to regard us with dislike. Proprietors were confirmed in the possession of their lands under certain conditions, pecuniary and

political; government, however, reserving to itself the use of certain tracts for public purposes, making at the same time a liberal allowance to owners for the same, upon a fair valuation. In this case, of course, reference was only had to such land as was under cultivation or had been cleared for agricultural or other purposes. Waste land and jungle reverted to us, but inducements were held out to procure the occupation of every acre of ground, by offering it rent free for a term of years to such as would turn it to profitable account.

For the most part, however, the barbarian Barons remained discontented. They relished not the deprivation of that influence over their countrymen and serfs which they had hitherto enjoyed; they were dissatisfied with the reasonable conditions we conceived it necessary to impose for according them the privilege of retaining their estates; and such of them as were compelled to part with their land, accepted the estimated amount, or price on valu-

ation, sullenly, and generally with sentiments of determined hostility towards us. The peasantry, however, for the most part, soon felt and learned to appreciate the change, and by far the greater number of them became speedily reconciled to our dominion. Some there were, notwithstanding, who still adhered to their former masters, the most malignant of whom enlisted in their cause predatory bands of dacoits or gang robbers, whose occupation was the plunder of British settlers, and vengeance on the peaceably disposed who had contentedly accepted our rule. For some years these malcontents proved exceedingly troublesome, and all the means we had at our disposal were wholly inadequate to meet the exigency of the case. Martaban, on the Salween, opposite to Maulmain, was still within the territories of the Burmese king, and it was ascertained beyond a doubt, that the perpetrators of the numerous outrages committed on our frontier, found shelter and encouragement there. No means

existed of identifying the ringleaders of these predatory gangs, and no positive information concerning them could, after the most persevering investigation, be obtained. The court of Ava pretended ignorance of these nefarious transactions, and professed to discountenance them by proclamation commanding the arrest of the offenders and their delivery to justice ; but there was very strong reason to suppose that the court's simulation of concern was a sham, and that the real object of the proclamation was made known to the Goung Gyours at Martaban, and in the interior of that province, by emissaries duly accredited for that purpose, and by them communicated to the peasantry under their respective jurisdictions. The mischief wrought by these freebooters was not confined simply to the plunder of British subjects, and the murder of their own countrymen. They lit their torches in the towns and villages, and time after time were men's habitations burned to the ground. The completion of their re-erection was the

signal for another application of the brand of the incendiary, and it soon became obvious that no effort would be left untried to obstruct, in every conceivable way, our projects for the efficient government and retention of the country, and to disgust us thoroughly with all the plans we had already formed for the future, which they strove with all their energies to frustrate, so as to make the consummation of our hopes of improvement and profit, an apparent impossibility.

The determined energy exerted by the British executive, after a time, checked to a great extent the depredations which were so frequent at the commencement of our administration. The Tenasserim provinces were considered eligible as penal settlements, and Maulmain was made the principal depôt for Indian convicts. European merchants established themselves in the country, and by dint of extraordinary perseverance, and no small amount of courage on the part of several individuals, a trade in teak timber was

initiated, which has now become a most important feature in the commerce of the country. To those European pioneers who, shortly after our occupation of the Tenasserim provinces, penetrated into the teak forests, which skirt the Attaran, the Thoungyeen, the Gyne, and the Ye rivers, braving the deadly fevers, the wild beasts of the jungle, and the scarcely less dangerous attacks of savage men, we are indebted for the formation of a traffic to which British Burmah at present owes much of her prosperity.

Much was to be accomplished before our occupation of our new possessions could become valuable to us or acceptable to the people. Timber was the only article of commerce at first, which the country produced. "The scanty population consisted chiefly of unsettled refugees from the neighbourhood of Rangoon ; destitute and lawless, without cattle or the means of cultivating the soil, if they had been so disposed, and ready to have recourse to violence

and robbery, for the means of subsistence. The more settled and better disposed portion were, like all Burmans, indolent and apathetic. Accustomed to a system of government under which to possess wealth or property of any kind, was to become the prey of the first official who chose to fleece them, they had never felt an inducement to exertion beyond the necessity of supplying the wants of the day; they had no incentives to enterprise, and appeared to be unambitious to acquire lands or wealth. To excite among such a people any degree of confidence in the justice and moderation of a new government, to convince them that the object of urging them to extend their cultivation beyond their limited requirements, was really their own benefit, to break through old habits, associations, and prejudices, to awaken a spirit of enterprise amongst them, an interest in property, or a sense of security in its possession, to which they had ever been utter strangers; and to invest land with a value [in a country possessing at

that time a very scanty population] was a work requiring time, patience, temper, and address. This work, however, proceeded gradually and surely, though slowly, and after the first or second year, the crops of rice, though not sufficient to make it an object of exportation, were abundant for the local consumption."

"During the earlier years, owing to the uncertainty which existed as to the permanent retention of the ceded territory, the assessments were necessarily annual; but in 1831-32, the experiment of a village settlement was effected, after much difficulty in overcoming the suspicions of the ryots. But so well were they pleased with the result of this first experiment, that, gathering confidence from the good faith with which the rate agreed upon had been adhered to, notwithstanding the great accession of cultivators, and consequent extension of cultivation, they, at its termination, readily agreed to a renewal for seven years; with the exception of the

settlement being made with each individual cultivator, instead of with the villages collectively. By such means every man knew with certainty, the highest amount which could possibly be demanded from him to whatever extent he might increase his cultivation ; and that amount having been fixed with reference only to the limited exertions which the people had hitherto been persuaded to make, and not with any prospective reference to those which they might yet make, the measure was eminently calculated to encourage them to fresh efforts. That it did so successfully, is proved by the fact, that during 1835-6-7, the first three years of this settlement, the price of paddy ranged about fifteen to eighteen rupees the hundred baskets, and a very large exportation of it took place during these years, both from the Amherst and Tavoy districts.”*

* Maulmain Directory for 1857. The writer estimates the population at that time at “only two to the square mile ;” clearly a mistake.

Matters were thus for several years progressing prosperously, when a murrain occurred among the buffaloes, for two or three successive seasons, and this calamity was followed by the visitation of cholera; influences which induced a panic amongst the cultivators, who deserted their fields, abandoned their agricultural pursuits, and hid themselves in terror in the deep jungles, where they supposed disaster would not overtake them; thus checking, to a serious extent, the commercial advancement of the country, by occasioning a total cessation of operations in the rice trade. The people did not recover from this panic until 1844, when they resumed their operations, and many who had been ruined in timber transactions, turned their attention to rice cultivation, which from that time materially increased.

When Major Broadfoot was commissioner of the Tenasserim provinces, the previously existing system of taxing the produce, was changed to that of assessing the land, the object for this

being to induce a more extensive growth of rice, which, of course, would have a tendency to cheapen its price in the market. At the same time every encouragement was offered to the natives of the Coromandel coast, to emigrate to these provinces, by holding out to them (through the proper channels) fair prospects of employment, and granting small allotments of ground to emigrants, upon exceedingly favourable conditions. Many Chuliahs emigrated to Maulmain, from the other side of the Bay of Bengal, and large numbers subsequently settled in the country. Some applied themselves to husbandry, some to the exercise of various handicrafts, whilst a larger number obtained occupation as Cooly labourers.

Whilst the most desirable means that could be devised were thus being pursued, with a view to encourage industry and improve the condition of the people, every care was taken to protect the rights of property and person. If the system of jurisprudence introduced, was not the

best that might have been devised, it had at least the merit of being impartial, and of being based upon sound principles of justice. Moreover it was calculated to meet the requirements of the people. If the dispensation of justice was somewhat tardy, it was generally considered sure; and it was, besides, within the reach of all classes. The poorest Cooly could sue his debtor at the lowest possible cost to himself; at the same time severe penalties were enforced for vexatious or fraudulent litigation. The juridical code recognized by the courts, was simple, comprehensive, and free from technicalities. The practice of the courts too, was straightforward, and adapted to the understanding of every suitor, who could prosecute or defend an action unaided by lawyers, and unembarrassed by their quirks, their quiddits, and their bills of costs. Among Burmans, all cases affecting the civil rights of property, real or personal, and all questions of inheritance were decided in accordance with the laws laid down

in the Damathat ; amongst Mahomedans the Mahomedan law ruled the judgment of the courts ; amongst Hindóos, respect was paid to the traditions of the Shastras, the Vedahs, and the dicta of learned Pundits. It seemed to have been the desire of the legislature that in all those divisions of the East India Company's possessions which were called "Non-Regulation Provinces," the administration of justice should be founded strictly upon principles of equity and common sense. As civilization progressed, however, innovations crept into the system. Upon the pretence of improvements in practice, technicalities were introduced, until now one would be puzzled to carry on a suit through all its various ramifications, without the assistance of an experienced vakeel.

The civil courts of the provinces were five in number. The three Courts of first instance were the Goung Gyroups', the Tseetkays', and the Assistant - Commissioner's Courts. The Goung Gyroups were district native judges, and

had original jurisdiction in all civil suits, without reference to the amounts involved. These functionaries were also vested with certain limited powers, as police magistrates, and assisted the deputy commissioner in the collection of revenue. The Tseetkays were also district judges, presiding over petty Courts of Request chiefly, their jurisdiction extending only to cases involving amounts under two hundred rupees. The Assistant Commissioner's jurisdiction was unlimited as to amounts above two hundred rupees. The Deputy Commissioner heard appeals from the decisions of the Goung Gyours and Tseetkays, and the Commissioner appeals from the Court of the Assistant-Commissioner, as well as *final appeals* from the judgments of the Deputy-Commissioner. Final appeals from the decisions of the Commissioner in appeal from the Assistant-Commissioner's Court were transmitted to Calcutta for the judgment of the Sudder Dewanny Adawlut.

The Criminal Courts were those of the police

magistrates and the Commissioner, the latter being a Court of Session and Appeal. There was no trial by jury. Five persons called "Assessors," sat as jurors on criminal trials, but their verdict was subject entirely to the approval or rejection of the Commissioner.

Perhaps it could hardly have been supposed that the Court of Ava would regard with complacency the success which had hitherto attended our proceedings in respect to the administration of the Tenasserim provinces, and the gradual increase of our power and consequence in that part of Burmah. For some years Englishmen who had commercial relations with Rangoon, had been subjected to considerable annoyances and losses consequent upon the dislike and jealousy with which all of their nation were regarded by the Burmese officials there. Masters of vessels, merchants and others, besides being subjected to most unjust exactions, were frequently treated with the most intolerable indignity, whipped, put into the stocks, and other-

wise maltreated. At last their insolence attained a point beyond which endurance was out of the question, and it became exceedingly desirable that something like an understanding should be arrived at, so that there might be no further mistakes.

The immediate *casus belli* was the confinement in the stocks of an English shipmaster, pending payment of a fine of 900 rupees, levied for some imaginary offence. The British merchants at Rangoon, who were guaranteed by the treaty of Yandaboo against oppression and extortion at the hands of the Burmese authorities, unanimously protested to the Indian Government against this and other outrages. The Governor-General was prompt in his interference. He addressed a dignified remonstrance to the Court of Ava, demanded the removal of His Golden-footed Majesty's tyrannical representative at Rangoon, the admission of a resident or agent at Ava, and prompt payment of a sum of £900 sterling to cover expenses already in-

curring in consequence of the Rangoon governor's proceedings. This message was sent per favour of Commodore George Robert Lambert, whose pennant ornamented the main of Her Britannic Majesty's frigate the *Fox*; which vessel was attended by the *Hermes* and *Phlegethon* steamers, and H. M.'s brig *Serpent*, auxiliaries calculated to impart considerable weight to the aforementioned demands in various respects. The Governor-General's missive was delivered in December, 1851. Some delay occurring, the Commodore thought proper likewise to demand reparation at the hands of the Burmese government for all extortions that had been practised in regard to British subjects, contrary to the stipulations of the treaty. These messages were sent to Ava through the authorities at Rangoon, who, gazing out upon the broad river, saw the *Fox* bristling with clean cannon out of every port hole, and the smaller vessels looking defiantly on.

The King of Ava's reply was delivered on

the 1st of January, 1852. It was pacific and deprecatory. His Majesty desired to comply with the requisitions set forth, and to maintain peace.

On the 4th of January the new governor arrived at Rangoon, empowered, as he represented, to settle the claims of the Indian government. He came in regal pomp, attended by a numerous retinue. No state proceedings were instituted against the ex-governor, who departed unmolested on the 6th, followed by fifty boats containing his personal effects and the booty acquired during several years of plunder and exaction. The new governor did not seem by any means in haste to come to a settlement with the Commodore. As a preliminary to other proceedings, he ordered the removal of a gun and a flagstaff placed for signaling to vessels in the stream, before the house of one of the principal English merchants established there; and the Commodore, unwilling to occasion needless hostility, directed their removal accordingly.

Upon this, trade was resumed. Still the new Governor made no sign, and eventually an Interpreter was sent to demand the cause of the silence and to ask if it would be convenient for the Viceroy to receive a deputation from the Commodore. The interpreter was not treated very civilly at first, but left with the impression that the deputation would be properly received. Several naval and military officers were accordingly appointed to wait upon the Burman functionary. He would not receive them, and they were subjected to insult and contumely. This conduct Commodore Lambert resented by seizing the King's ship, which was then lying in the river near Rangoon. British subjects residing at Rangoon were then immediately ordered to embark on board the *Proserpine* steamer, the town being declared in a state of blockade ; and by eight o'clock P. M. everybody, English, Armenians, Moguls, Jews, Portuguese, with their families, amounting in all to about four hundred, were safely on board that vessel, with such traps

as they could secure in the hurry, and were soon on their voyage to Maulmain.

Seeing that we were in no humour for trifling, the Burmese, who were not yet prepared fully to do battle, endeavoured, by such devices as oriental ingenuity suggested, to delay hostilities ; and some officers repaired on board the *Fox*, charged with numerous excuses relative to the proceedings of the viceroy. Commodore Lambert was proof against cajolery, and the Burmese officers returned to the shore. Then, as the vessels with the King's ship were preparing to move, a letter from the Governor was sent to the Commodore, threatening that if he and the squadron under him attempted to pass the stockades down the river they would be fired upon. "Fire but a pistol," replied the gallant Commodore, "and I'll blow your stockades to the devil !"

Of course it now became very evident that the Burmese intended to try conclusions with us, and reports reached the squadron of a large force being in the neighbourhood to oppose us.

On the 9th of January, the *Hermes* towed the *Fox* down as far as the upper stockade, before which the frigate anchored, the steamer returning to bring on the King's ship ; the other vessels also weighed and prepared to pass down. When the *Hermes* arrived off the stockade with her prize astern, the guns from the shore were opened upon her ; immediately after which the *Fox* poured a terrific broadside on the enemy's position, which was followed by the guns of the *Hermes* and the *Phlegethon* in rapid succession, to the astonishment and terror of the foe, who that day lost about 300 men, and had a similar number wounded, besides losing a gun boat and her crew, sunk by a broadside. These decisive measures quieted the Burmese for the time, and the Commodore started off for Calcutta in the *Hermes* for instructions.

The Governor-General was absent from Calcutta when the Commodore arrived there, and nothing could be settled until his return, although an Extraordinary Council was held on the 18th,

and the 18th Royal Irish were ordered to hold themselves in readiness for service. The Commodore returned in the *Hermes* to the Rangoon river, which he reached on the 27th. On the 29th Lord Dalhousie arrived at Calcutta, and on the following day presided at the Supreme Council, at which the Commodore's proceedings were approved, and war was deemed almost inevitable. A wing of the 18th, and a company of Artillery, in all about 500 men, were sent down for the protection of Maulmain, the 67th N. I. and half a company of Native Artillery were despatched to Arracan, and the 80th and other regiments were forthwith warned for action.

The *Fire Queen* brought the Governor-General's instructions from Calcutta to the Commodore, whose ship was in the Irrawaddy, and on arrival towed the *Fox* up off the Hastings sand, about five miles below Rangoon. "On proceeding up the river, on passing the first stockade—some twelve or fifteen miles from the en-

trance—the steamer and frigate were both fired upon, by which the *Fox* lost a man. The frigate returned the fire with shot and shell.”* The *Tenasserim* and *Fire Queen* on other occasions were likewise fired upon. At length communications were opened, under a flag of truce, with the authorities ashore. No fresh demands were made by the Governor-General beyond a written apology to himself for the insult to the deputation. The Burmese authorities, having reason to be apprehensive of the Commodore, who was so energetically retaliative, desired that negotiations might proceed through Colonel Bogle, the Commissioner of the Tenasserim provinces. While matters were thus in *statu quo*, the Burmese fired on the *Serpent* at the entrance of the Negrais river, off which the brig was stationed. Captain Luard landed his men and burned the enemy’s works, consisting of three small stockades.

* “The Second Burmese War,” by Lieut. W. F. B. Laurie, Madras Artillery.

“ At length, on the 10th or 12th of February, it was decided by the Indian government to send an expedition to Burmah. It was conjectured that, if actual hostilities should not ultimately become necessary, the appearance of an armament might probably excite the apprehensions of the Burmese, and induce them to yield to the just demands of the British.”*

Besides the wing of the 18th, and the Company of Artillery from Bengal already despatched to Burmah, orders were received at Madras for three European companies of Artillery, H. M.’s 51st K. O. L. I., two regiments of Native Infantry, and one Engineer Officer to be in readiness for immediate embarkation for Rangoon, if necessary, and all the war steamers from Bombay that could be spared were ordered to Rangoon forthwith. The *Feroze* frigate, under Captain Lynch, as Commodore of the Indian Naval Squadron, the *Moozuffer*, *Zenobia*,

* “ The Second Burmese War,” by Lieut. W. F. B. Laurie, Madras Artillery.

Sesostris, and *Medusa* were appointed, likewise the *Berenice*, to act as troop and store ship. On the 25th March the whole of this squadron were at anchor in the Madras roads, and on the 31st the troops from that presidency, consisting in all of 4,388 souls, officers, soldiers, and followers, embarked for field service, and arrived in the Rangoon river on the 7th April, when they found that Admiral Austen and General Godwin, the latter of whom had been appointed to the Command in Chief of the land forces, had proceeded with H. M.'s war steamers *Hermes*, *Rattler*, *Salamander*, and the H. C.'s steamer *Proserpine*, to attack Martaban, and bring on troops to the chief scene of action.

These war steamers appeared in front of Martaban on the 5th of April, and opened fire. A wing of the Royal Irish formed the storming party ashore, and this mere handful of men succeeded, after a short, but decisive fight, in accomplishing the occupation of this important position, after which General Godwin returned to Rangoon.

The Governor-General had written a final letter to the King of Ava through Colonel Bogle, who presented the same to the Governor of Martaban for transmission to his Majesty ; in which was repeated the terms previously dictated with a demand for the payment of 10 lacks of rupees, to cover the expenses of the expedition already sent to enforce the conditions. General Godwin, on his return to Rangoon from Martaban, sent Captain Latter ashore in the *Proserpine*, with a flag of truce, to enquire if any reply to the Governor-General's letter had been received from the Court of Ava ? The Burmese fired upon the flag of truce, on which Commander Brooking blew up a magazine, and, on Easter Sunday, (April 11th) operations against Rangoon and Dalla commenced in earnest. On the 14th, after we had occupied or destroyed every other position on the right shore of the river, we succeeded in taking the Shoay-da-goung Pagoda and the stockade which encompassed it (the most important post in the neighbourhood), and drove

the enemy beyond Kemendine, when the investment of Rangoon may be said to have been accomplished. In the course of the four days' fighting we lost two officers and had fourteen wounded. Fifteen non-commissioned officers, rank and file, were also killed and 118 wounded. The loss sustained by the enemy was not ascertained, but it must have been immense. Ninety-eight of their guns and seventy jingals were captured, besides numerous stores, including large quantities of ammunition, and 480 muskets, with and without stocks.

A fortnight's rest, and it seemed to occur as a matter of some importance that we should effect the capture of the Burmese Governor of Rangoon, in order that he might (in accordance with the General's threat to one of that functionary's ambassadors who came with a letter a few days after the fight) be hanged upon the nearest tree. On the 7th an expedition, consisting of about 500 of the 18th and 35th M. N. I., with a party of 60 Marines, went up the river in the *Tenas-*

serim, *Pluto*, and *Medusa*, in pursuit of him. Intelligence had been received that the fugitive was at Mabee, and there the forces disembarked early on the 8th. They arrived, however, just in time to be too late, for the governor had departed, leaving behind him a good many of his personal effects.

The investment of Rangoon was followed on the 19th of May by the capture of Bassein, which occupied fifty minutes from the time of firing the first shot. The Burmese lost 800 men, and the total of guns and jingals captured amounted to eighty-one.

On the morning of the 26th the Burmese under Moun-Bwosh, the Governor of Martaban, attacked that position, which was in our occupation. They were repulsed with considerable loss, our forces also suffering considerably.

On the 3rd of June an expedition consisting of a company of H. M.'s 80th, the Rifle company of the 67th B. N. I., and a detachment of Madras Sappers and Miners, accompanied by a

small party of marines and sailors, embarked on board the *Phlegethon* (which took in tow the boats of the squadron) for the purpose of proceeding against Pegu—a city about seventy-five miles northward of Rangoon. We were assisted in our operations against the place by a band of Peguans under one MOUNG-TAH. On the 5th the old town of Pegu was in our possession.

The results of all our victories in the last war clearly demonstrated how little the patriotism of the people kept pace with the ambition of their rulers, and how little was the identity of interest between them. No sooner were we in unmistakeable possession of Martaban, Rangoon, Bassein, and Pegu, than the natives came quietly in to sell us provisions, and to place themselves under our protection. They seemed infinitely to prefer the mild yoke of the enlightened foreigners to the rapacious administration of the Burmese governors. Still, beyond the neighbourhoods of the strongholds we had taken, we heard of the

proceedings of the enemy; of the levying of troops, the collection of ammunition, the plundering of villages in order to furnish the "sinews of war," and other mighty preparations for attack and resistance. Decision was recommended; an advance on Prome (a fortified city on the Irrawaddy, about 220 miles from Rangoon towards Ava) was determined on. A flotilla under Commander Tarleton, R.N., was despatched up the Irrawaddy, and on the 9th of July Prome was in our occupation. I ought not to omit to mention that in this latter engagement another Maha Bundoola, a son of the famous chieftain who figured so conspicuously in the first war, was understood to be the leader. The son, however, by no means emulated the courage of the father, for he fled before our forces very ignominiously.

The possibility of a naval expedition to Ava was at this time understood to have been in contemplation, and many circumstances were urged in favour of such an attempt. The rivers

in October and November would have water sufficient for steamers of considerable size to proceed up to the capital with perfect safety, and it was necessary to define the northern boundary of our possessions before issuing the proclamation declaring the annexation of new provinces. At length it was decided to send a force through the Aeng Pass into the basin of the Irrawaddy, to cut off all communication between Ava and Prome, claiming Meaday as a frontier station, and another force from Martaban up the Sittang river as far as Toungnoo.

The opposition which our forces encountered in their proceedings subsequent to the capture of Prome was of comparative insignificance. Meaday and Toungnoo were duly invested by our troops, and the result of our achievements was the annexation to the British territories of the fertile and extensive province of Pegu, including Negrais and Bassein.

I arrived in Burmah (after a sojourn of many years in Hindostan) in the beginning of the

year 1854, seven months after peace had been proclaimed. The province of Pegu was then still in some disorder. Conspiracies were every day discovered, dacoities and murders committed and rebellions organized. Captain Latter, Deputy-Commissioner of the Prome district, an able linguist and scholar, was assassinated in his own bungalow on the night of the 8th December, 1853, by persons who gained admittance disguised in female attire, who, it is supposed, were emissaries from the Court of Ava; and Captain Barry, who was in command of a party of sepoy, was killed in an ambush in the jungle. The same atrocities which were frequent immediately after our occupation of the Tenasserim provinces, marked the early days of our possession of Pegu, and the newspaper reports of the day, from that quarter, teemed with records of violence and crime. The season of tumult, disorder, and disaffection, has now happily given place to a more

settled and satisfactory state of things, and under a government properly constituted, and efficiently administered, our possessions in Burmah are likely to prove eventually of infinite importance and value. Changes for the better are certainly required, as will I have no doubt appear clear from a perusal of some of the observations contained in the following pages, and there is now, I believe, room left for hope that the good time will not be long in coming.

I trust that the impression under which I have been induced to publish my experiences is not an incorrect one, conceiving as I do that the views taken of a country, and of a race of people about whose characteristics most of the dwellers in this quarter of the globe are but imperfectly acquainted, by a man who has travelled much, and who is certainly not a careless, indifferent, or superficial observer of men and manners, cannot fail to be interesting to a large class of readers. Some of the stories and

descriptions will doubtless be found to be amusing, as well as, to a certain extent, instructive, and I have, so far as in me lies, endeavoured throughout to avoid degenerating into dulness or insipidity.

CHAPTER II.

How I came to go to Burmah.—Captain Biden.—Voyage in the “Hugh Lindsay.”—Masulipatam.—Coringa.—The Temples of Juggernathpooram. — Nautch Girls.—Vizagapatam. — Munsuorcottah.—A shooting party ashore.

I AM not going to bore my readers with an autobiography, nor to engage their attention with details of a personal nature, so far as I am concerned, any farther than may be especially necessary for the due appreciation of the subjects upon which I propose to write, and the elucidation of the ways and means by which I profess to have become competent to write at all upon those subjects. A little of personal narrative I cannot help giving, however, as a vehicle for the

introduction of a good deal of matter which I hope will be considered interesting and instructive ; and, in regard to such particulars of my own history as may occur throughout the following pages, I venture to solicit liberal indulgence.

Premising thus much then, I may state that in the early part of the year of Grace 1845, I found myself on board a vessel bound from London to Calcutta, having, I suppose, been impelled thither by a "a roving disposition," and a love of adventure not uncommon to British youths of twenty. I went out without any particular aim, and consequently made a variety of random hits. I soon got employment however, as a writer for the Anglo-Indian newspaper press, but never settled for any length of time in any particular place, and, like the stone which is constantly rolling, I did not succeed in gathering any moss. From Calcutta I journeyed to Bombay, from thence to Ceylon, from thence to Madras, where, for some time, I edited a news-

paper, and became a pleader in the East India Company's Courts, and in which presidency I found myself at the commencement of the year 1854, sitting one fine morning in my verandah, sipping coffee and contemplating the luxuriance of my landlord's vine and the proportions of my landlord's fig-tree.

I believe sipping coffee to be an occupation which induces reflection, operates upon the mental faculties, and suggests curious ideas. From the vine and the fig-tree my thoughts became directed to the roof above me and the walls about me, and I reflected that the habitation in which I dwelt, in common with the trees, plants, shrubs, and so forth, which flourished on the ground surrounding it, were my landlord's, and for the occupation and use of which I had to pay a monthly rent in goodly rupees. Then it occurred to me that I was somewhat in the position of the Manchester operative who'd "got no work to do," a state of things which would be very likely to preclude the possibility of my con-

tinuing to remain on satisfactory terms with my landlord ; so acting under the old impulse, I resolved to move. The question arose whither ? It was soon answered—Burmah ! The wars were just over, and numbers of people of all sorts were emigrating from Madras and Bengal to our newly-acquired possessions. My determination was soon made and speedily acted upon. I disposed of my furniture and effects, settled my affairs, and made arrangements for my voyage to Maulmain.

The vessel in which I engaged my passage was the H. E. I. Company's steamer, the *Hugh Lindsay*, an old clumsy craft, which had been used for government purposes for many years, and which was then almost past further service. As this vessel was engaged to convey troops from Madras to Coringa, calling at Masulipatam for a portion of the regiment, and then to take another lot to Vizagapatam, and proceed afterwards to Munsoorcottah, for a detachment of sepoy and their officers destined for Burmah.

I was obliged to solicit a passage, as a matter of favour, by an application to the Master-Attendant of Madras, and as, perhaps, a passing notice of a man who has played a conspicuous part amongst the community of which, for many years, he was a distinguished member, and played it well, may not be amiss ; I will pause to record a few remembrances of one who has run his course worthily, whose toils are now over, and whose reward, irrespective of the crowning glories which we believe must await the termination of such a career as his, is the esteem and affection with which his memory will ever be regarded by all sorts and conditions of people, in a place where his philanthropy and usefulness were so abundantly manifested.

The Master-Attendant's offices occupy a portion of a goodly sized *puckha* building, situated on the beach, having in front of it a flag-staff, and on the roof an electric time ball. Contiguous are the offices and godowns of the Collector of Customs, and all the other offices

connected with the marine department. It was on a bright February morning, when my palanquin bearers stopped before the southernmost door of this edifice, and deposited me on the threshold. I walked up stairs, gave my card to a *peadah*, who was in attendance, and was shortly afterwards ushered into the presence of Captain Christopher Biden.

This gentleman had been a master in the merchant service of the East India Company in the olden time, when the floating tea-chests (as the Company's ships were called) used to make six months' voyages from London to Calcutta, via, St. Helena and the Cape of Good Hope. He was Master Attendant at Madras for many years, and never did the Company boast a more valuable servant.

The situation of the coast about Madras renders it peculiarly liable to the violence of the March and October tempests, which rage furiously in gusts from the North East, South East, and East. Even in calm weather a heavy surf

rolls upon the beach, in stormy weather it comes in roaring in continuous terrific walls of foam. The roadstead does not afford particularly safe anchorage even in the most favourable seasons of the year. In the months I have named, it is one of the most perilous places for shipping in the world. Every year there are dreadful shipwrecks, and hundreds are seen perishing beyond the possibility of help, although but a stone's throw from the shore.

The prevention, as far as practicable, of such calamities was the first object of Captain Biden on being appointed to office, but the organization of such a system as would turn out anything like effectual, by way of precaution and assistance in such cases, was a matter of difficulty. However liberal Honourable John might have been in the abstract, he was excessively slow in the demonstrations of his benevolence and philanthropy as regarded all schemes of progress and improvement, and there was so much paper and red tape required before there could be any offi-

cial recognition of public requirements, that really a well-meaning man might well get out of patience in the course of his exertions for the public weal.

Captain Biden commenced a course of important meteorological and astronomical observations, which enabled him to ascertain, with accuracy, the indications of approaching atmospherical and physical changes, and to announce to mariners the coming of a storm, many hours before the ordinary symptoms of bad weather manifested themselves. Directly those indications appeared to his ever-watchful mind, signals were hoisted at the flagstaff before his office, warning all vessels in the roadstead to stand out to sea, and woe to the mariner whoever neglected to act upon such warning.

The boats in use on the Coromandel coast are of peculiar construction, and the boatmen and fishermen are quite a distinct class of men. The boats (which are called Masulah boats) are especially adapted for weathering the heavy surf,

which rushes furiously upon the shore. They are very deep, and the wood used in their building being strongly sewn with coir and bamboo, instead of being fastened in the ordinary way with nails, screws, and battens, gives to the force of the billows and the bark rides safely through the troubled waters. Peculiar skill is required in the management of these boats. One or two of the crew must be constantly engaged in baling out the water which perpetually finds its way through the sides and bottom during a voyage from the shore to a vessel in the roadstead; and any carelessness on the part of the steersman would be calculated to occasion an accident. Formerly disasters were of frequent occurrence. It was not unusual for boatmen, when they got their passengers on to the surf, to make extortionate demands. If these were complied with, (and they generally were by timid people) the passenger was landed on the beach with a dry skin; if not, he would probably be knocked off his seat by a sudden lurching of the boat, and be

severely bruised by his fall, as well as half drowned by the heavy sea shipped in consequence of the steersman's manœuvre, or else he would be tumbled into the water on endeavouring to land. Occasionally more serious results than mere ducking and bruising accrued. Robberies were not infrequent that defied detection, and lives were mysteriously lost without affording any clue to the discovery of the why and the wherefore or the means used. There was no remedy for such evils until Captain Biden took up the subject. He communicated with the local government, which enacted that all Masulah boats plying for hire within the limits of the Port should be duly licenced, numbered and registered, the owners themselves entering into sufficient recognizances to conform to certain rules and regulations, which were thereby published. At the outset a good many difficulties presented themselves. The boatmen objected to be guided by any scale of fares, and refused to work, but the Master Attendant persevered

in his course, and eventually opposition ceased. It was some time however before the Madras boatmen were entirely cured of their lawless propensities, but the fear of consequences in the long run operated as a pretty effectual check upon the exercise of them.

He was truly the friend of the sailor, and was the means of rendering the Sailor's Home at Madras a most useful institution. By his exertions a most excellent library was established for the use of its inmates, and the rules, of which he was the originator, testify to his benevolence, thoughtfulness, and appreciation of the means and requirements of the class of men for whose benefit the Home was intended.

Ever foremost in the furtherance of all tangible schemes of progress and improvement, his name will always be associated with those movements which have accomplished beneficial results, and the charitable institutions of the Presidency acknowledged him as one of their most munificent supporters. Of his private charities no

note was taken, but it was said of him that the needy and unfortunate, if deserving objects of sympathy, never appealed to him in vain ; and many a widow and orphan whom he has relieved, now mourn the loss of a benefactor, and bless and reverence his memory. If he had a weakness, it was for writing long letters to newspapers, but his correspondence generally related to matters of passing importance, and his letters concerning maritime subjects were frequently valuable communications, which invariably commanded the attention of sea-faring men.

In person, Captain Biden was rather short and thickly set, and at the time of which I am writing, was about sixty-five years of age. His countenance bore evidences of an arduous life in many deep furrows, and age had whitened his hair, and exposure to rough weather had bronzed his skin ; but his clear, grey eye beamed with earnestness and kind and honest purpose, and although habit had given a curtness to his

manner and conversation, and somewhat of a harshness to his voice, there was still a general heartiness apparent through all that could not be mistaken, and his abruptness was never construed into unkindness by those who came into communication with him, whether friends or strangers.

When I entered his room on this occasion, I found him dressed, as usual, in white jacket and trowsers, his shirt and cravat loose about the throat, and a coloured vest; the ordinary costume adopted by Europeans and Eurasians in India. He rose to receive me, and after the customary salutations, I opened upon the business of my visit. The matter of my passage was arranged without any difficulty, upon the understanding, however, that as all the cabins were occupied by the officers who were proceeding in the vessel on service, I should be obliged to sleep on the poop during the voyage—an arrangement which is attended with no material inconvenience in that part of the world at that

season of the year, as there is rarely any rain whatever during the continuance of the north-east monsoon, and the air is mild and genial. A cotton mattress, blanket and pillow, laid on the deck under the awning, which is always extended above the quarter-decks of ships voyaging in these seas in dry weather, and the traveller requires nothing else for the night.

I think it was about eleven o'clock in the forenoon when we weighed and stood out from the offing. The fore-part of the steamer was crowded with sepoys and their families, and camp followers, the major portion being packed upon a grated platform erected over the engine room, amidships from the paddle boxes. They had no room for exercise, for altogether there were about two hundred and fifty of both sexes, old and young, occupying a space which might have covered something like seventeen square feet altogether, above and below, and there their rations were served and eaten amongst them, the consumption of food, of course, being limited

to such as did not suffer from sea sickness, a malady to which the Indian constitution appeared to me to be particularly susceptible.

As a very strong and disagreeable odour pervaded that portion of the vessel, I confined myself to the after-part exclusively, and, there being no ladies on board, we were not precluded from smoking our cheroots on the poop. The officers of the ship and the passengers were exceedingly good fellows, and it soon became apparent to me that my voyage in such company would be pleasant and agreeable. The table was everything that the traveller could expect, and the wines were quite unobjectionable.

On getting up on the following morning, we found ourselves in smooth water off Masulipatam, where we anchored for a few hours. Immediately on our arrival, the fact was announced by firing a gun, a signal which was immediately answered from the shore, and very shortly afterwards we saw the masulah boats coming towards us, bringing the men who were to embark with

us. When these new comers were put on board, our decks forward were terribly crowded. Masulipatam is a small town, but it contains an industrious population, and does a considerable trade in a peculiar quality of cloth, manufactured by the inhabitants of the district. The most influential of the native residents are Mahomedans, who transact most of the business done in the staple commodity of the place. The neighbouring country is fertile, but low and flat, the cocoa-nut and palm topes, or plantations, running down nearly into the sea. Masulipatam is of little consequence as a port, and is rarely visited except by native vessels. It is a military station, and there is a cutcherry containing the establishments of the collector and magistrate, with a staff of clerks, peons, and shroffs.

The next place at which we stopped was Corigna, a port of some importance, situated near the entrance of the Godavery, a wide, majestic-looking, but shallow stream, but one of the principal rivers of Southern India. Here we

left the majority of our passengers. We remained here nearly a day, as landing the sepoys and camp followers, and the baggage belonging to the men and officers, occupied a good deal of time. Some of us went ashore to pay a visit to the famous temples of Juggenauthpooram, which are situated opposite the town of Coringa. The temples, shrines, and religious grounds occupy a considerable space of ground, and have a picturesque appearance. The architecture is of the ordinary oriental character, and the ornamentation is elaborate and beautiful. The buildings about are insignificant, scattered within groves, topes, and gardens, shaded everywhere by palm, cocoa, mango, jackfruit, and other trees. There is besides a small native town and a bazaar. There are a number of choultries, for the accommodation of pilgrims, and these are generally pretty well crowded with devotees from all parts of the country. The resident population consists chiefly of Bramins of the sacerdotal order, and the nautch or dancing girls (who

minister to the temples and their families. It is a romantic spot, and usually a solemn and sacred calm prevails over the locality, somewhat especially for worship and adoration of the gods for sacrifices and festivals to the presiding deities. Alas ! that the holiest impulses of our common nature should be made subservient to the vilest propensities, and the most degrading ends ! To think that with the worship of the Creator there should be associated the most abominable and obscene orgies ! Yet so it is in these temples. The dancing girls of Juggernath-pooram are reared, trained, and educated for the gratification of their Brahmin masters, the priests, and to submit themselves for hire for the purpose of increasing the emoluments of these temples. They are devoted to this horrible purpose when they are mere infants, compelled to submit to this infamy by their own mothers, and induced to continue in it either by their own inclination, formed by the training they have had, or else by the coercion of those under whose

power they are placed. These girls are all the children of nautch girls, and, generally speaking, of women who have continued to serve the temples. In many instances, they throw off the religious obligation to remain at their birthplace, and emigrate for the purpose of pursuing their calling elsewhere. They are congregated in vast numbers at Coringa and adjacent places, there are many hundreds of them at Madras, and many cross the seas in native vessels to pursue their profession in foreign places. The majority of them are exquisitely formed, and have remarkably pretty faces, which are, however, disfigured by the jewellery they wear in their noses. Their features are delicate, their eyes large, black, and lustrous, shaded by long silken lashes ; their long, luxuriant black hair is arranged in a cluster at the back of their heads, which are surrounded with glittering ornaments ; their dress is picturesque and characteristic, and their motions are elegant and graceful. The expression of their faces, however, is generally sensual. The eyes

of the gazelle are very beautiful, but the mental fire which indicates the soul's pre-eminence is wanting.

We had no opportunity of making more than a hasty inspection of the place and of the temples, and I am consequently unable to give anything like a minute description of them from personal observation. The effigy of the Great Rama is there, and looks down benignantly on his worshippers. The Hindoos' notions of divinity are, to say the least of them, absurd, judging from the specimens they afford us in the construction of the supposed likenesses of their deities. When anybody enters any of these temples he is required to take off his shoes, but generally the interior presents nothing which may be considered a compensation for the trouble and inconvenience. There is only the god grinning at the back over the altar, and him you can see and admire, if you feel disposed, from the doorway.

What struck me particularly was the number

of doves and pigeons which the Brahmins keep here. The birds did not seem to understand Europeans very well, for they kept at a very respectful distance from us, but they are very confidential with the Brahmins and servants of the temples, and seem fully to comprehend the Telugu phrases addressed to them by their human acquaintances. Besides these, the Brahmins appear to make pets of diminutive goats; and I saw some of the most exquisite, darling little cream-coloured, hump-backed, bright-eyed Brahminee bulls I ever saw anywhere.

We could only stop ashore about half an hour, and had no time to visit Coringa. Lieut. S. (one of our party,) who had been quartered at Rajamundry, told me that he had very frequently visited Juggernathpooram, and had been there on the occasion of various solemn ceremonies and religious festivals. He said that the feasts were the most disgraceful scenes of riot and debauchery that he had ever dreamt of, and I can conceive it. When either Hindoos or Ma-

homedans get up any excitement of joy or grief, they drug themselves chiefly with a substance called *bhang*, which is, in reality, inferior opium. They will work themselves up to any given pitch with this stuff, but they do not profess to take intoxicating drinks. The lower orders of natives will, however, drink toddy, a juice which exudes from palm-trees, and which ferments when exposed to the action of the sun, and becomes very intoxicating. Fancy the combination of influences!—Fanatical men drugged with *bhang*; dancing girls, tom toms, and cymbals, any quantity of discordant singing and obscene language between men and women, the whole scene lit up with innumerable torches, and imagine those quiet groves, gardens, temples, canopied by the mild, clear heaven, converted into a terrestrial Pandemonium, and all for the honour and glory of—God!

As a political question, even at the present time, sage men are dubious regarding the propriety of endeavouring to effect any alteration in

these matters by even the mildest advice, the gentlest interference. And depend on it those sage men are right. To destroy the influences which long custom, tradition, and the power of priestcraft have combined to establish, must be a work of time and cautious endeavour. Example does infinitely more than precept, and fraternal intercourse more than anything else. From my experience, I can safely assert that the natives of India would love the English if the English would only look upon them as of themselves. Even as it is, those of the superior order who have been admitted into close companionship with us, are proud of such privileges, and would make sacrifices to maintain their intimacy. But we have such an innate propensity to assume a superiority over other people, that, however much we may be respected and feared, I do not find that we are admired and loved as a nation. Go to Pondicherry, to Chandernagore, or to Ynam, and you will find a perfect unanimity there between the French

colonists and the aborigines. Observe any native of the French possessions in India, and you will see him cross himself, and at daybreak piously repeat his Angelus. The task of evangelization would not be difficult if properly pursued, but it will never be accomplished by ostentatious professors, who make their work a matter of business, for which pecuniary recompense is accepted. Fraternize with them, and in time they will respect you, imitate many of your habits, and from step to step they will assimilate themselves until they embrace your religion.

The harbour at the mouth of the Godavery is apparently almost landlocked, and generally smooth and safe. At Coringa there are docks and ship-building yards, but as the bar is shallow, only vessels of small draught are launched there. A peculiar description of tobacco is grown in the neighbourhood and manufactured into cigars, which are called Lunkas. They are in very great demand all over India, but will not keep their flavour for any great length of time.

There are generally a good number of ships lying off this port, chiefly native vessels, and a good trade is done in rice, cardomums, chilies, and other condiments.

As soon as our new batch of troops were on board we got up steam, weighed and stood out again to sea. The weather was delightful, and the temperature agreeable. At Vizagapatam we left the Sepoys we took up at Coringa, remaining in the little bay but a very short time. There is a fort at Vizagapatam (which is a military station), and an establishment for European military pensioners of the East India Company. Viewed from the bay, it appears an exceedingly picturesque and pretty place, but I was informed that the heat during the dry season is excessive and the dust intolerable.

The absence of the crowd of troops with which we had been loaded was found to be far more agreeable than their company. The incessant din and clatter they kept up during the daytime would have tortured a nervous man

dreadfully ; and those who had the misfortune to live forward—the officers of the ship and the engineers—must have felt very uncomfortable from their vicinity. The air about the ship seemed to be freer and clearer when they were gone, and the decks, and forecastle, and gratings, and all the parts and portions of the vessel which had been occupied by them, underwent a thorough cleansing. But we were not to enjoy this state of things very long. We were next bound to Munsoorcottah, on the Orissa coast, to take up detachments from Berhampore, and we arrived off that place on the morning of the sixth day after our departure from Madras.

Munsoorcottah consists of a custom-house and a godown, and about a dozen fishermen's huts. I could not understand why a custom-house should have been built there, unless it is because it is the nearest spot on the coast to Berhampore, which is a large and important military station, and which is situated some eight or nine miles inland. As we had to wait

here for the troops that were to embark, and which were not expected to arrive until the following morning, myself, three of the officers of the ship, and Lieutenant H., determined upon taking our guns ashore, and wandering a little in the interior, with a view to some sport. Accordingly a boat was manned, and immediately after breakfast we departed on our expedition.

On landing, we felt half inclined to order ourselves back again to the ship; for the sun shone very powerfully, and the heat on shore was intense; but it was determined that we should not return, at all events without some spoil, so we concluded to proceed, little imagining, however, the fatigue and suffering we should have to encounter. Beyond the custom-house (which is situated on the beach) for about a mile inland, there is nothing but an uneven plain of soft sand, to traverse which is excessively fatiguing. Our party consisted of five persons, exclusive of a servant, who carried a basket of provisions, and a Lascar, who bore

after us a serai of water, which contained about half a gallon. This quantity of water and a bottle of brandy were all we conceived it necessary to take with us in the way of drinkables. Our feet sunk in the sand at every step we took, so that after accomplishing about a quarter of a mile, we were fain to throw ourselves down for a few minutes' rest and a draught of water. We proceeded on for another quarter of a mile, and then again waited to refresh, when we found that a gallon of water between five thirsty men was an insufficient quantity, and that not more than half a pint was left when we came to our second halting-place. This we mixed with about a quarter of a pint of brandy, which gave us about a wineglassful of stimulating drink a-piece. After this we went on again, keeping in view a clump of cocoa-nut trees and a native cottage, which, however, appeared to us to be a very long way off. We reached the spot at last, faint and weary, and prayed for water, but the well was dry, and

the churlish cottagers would spare none out of their household stock, which they said they had to bring from a considerable distance. The chief engineer, a large, powerful Scotsman, suggested that we should take by force what was denied to our entreaties, but I proposed a better plan ; which was, that we should purchase some of the cocoa-nuts which we saw about, and quench our thirst with the refreshing milk. We did so, although an exorbitant price was demanded for them, and never was beverage more grateful to the famished wayfarer.

After getting over this mile of sandhills, aridity, and barrenness, the country presented a fertile and pleasing aspect. The day was clear, and we could see high land in the distance ; but for many miles to the westward the country is flat and in good cultivation. The sands, from constant drifting, form a ridge from which we could take a tolerable survey over very extensive tracts of rice-fields, palm topes, and jungle land, well watered by small streams, which, however, did

not seem to us to have any outlet into the sea. The Lascar who accompanied us, pointed out a building surrounded by trees, about half a mile distant, which he said would be a good place for us to go to, to eat our tiffin. There was no beaten route to it from where we stood, and it was evident that if we meant to enjoy any sporting, we would be obliged to do a good deal of wading and bog-trotting. We none of us minded water up to the knees, for American drill trousers are not very expensive articles of dress, and old voyagers have little dread, generally speaking, of catarrhs or influenza. Onwards, then, we went, with the spirit of true sportsmen, although our sailor friends were certainly but indifferent amateurs. We had not proceeded very far, ere we had an opportunity of replenishing our serai from a clear and limpid brook, and myself and Lieut. H. succeeded in knocking down several teal and paddy birds. The flesh of the latter bird, by-the-way, is but indifferent eating, but boiled down with fowl

they add amazingly to the value of a tureen of Mulligatawny, in point of richness and flavour. The natives say they are good in curries, but I never tried them. In my opinion the teal is superior to either the partridge or the pigeon.

Arrived at the place indicated by the Lascar, we found an empty wooden building, consisting of three rooms (the roof thatched and partially destroyed), which appeared to have been uninhabited for a very long time. About a quarter of a mile off we were told there was a village, and that a man lived there who was master of the place. He was a good man, the Lascar told me, and had a bazaar and sold arrack. We did not feel disposed, just then, to walk that quarter of a mile, which, for aught we knew to the contrary, might have been considerably more; but we told the fellow to fetch the man with all convenient speed, and to borrow five mats for us to lie upon, for there was nothing upon which we could stretch ourselves except the boarded floor, which was less to be preferred as regarded

cleanliness than the bare earth outside the building. It was also suggested that he should bring some sugar and a pint of arrack, with which I proposed to manufacture some punch, with the addition of a small quantity of cloves and cinnamon and a little lemon juice, as it was thought that would serve to help out the brandy. He was also directed to bring us an earthen chatty, to enable us to prepare the ingredients.

The compound, or enclosure, in which this bungalow was situated was hedged round by a high bamboo fence. It was about two acres in extent, and had the appearance of a good-sized meadow. On one side of the house there were several cocoa-nut and jack-fruit trees, but we did not observe a single human being about the place. In a short time the Lascar returned, bringing with him a posse of villagers and the bazaar proprietor. The latter did not look like a man of much consequence. He was a thin-faced man of about fifty, rather tall, and of remarkably slender proportions, his legs resem-

bling walking-sticks with the handles downwards. He was naked to the waist, round which was arranged a dirty longhee. The mats, arrack, spices, chatty, and limes were brought, and we prepared to discuss our meal. I made the punch, which consisted of half a pint of arrack to the same quantity of brandy, into which we placed the sagar (half a pound), and a due proportion of cloves and cinnamon. The ingredients are then ignited, and after some portion of spirit is burnt out, a small quantity of lime-juice is added. Half a pint of water may then be poured in, and after that the chatty containing this compound is placed over a fire to boil, some lemon-peel being inserted to flavour the punch. It is then allowed to cool, when it is bottled and is ready for use, and may be drank either as a liqueur, or mixed with cold or hot water as a beverage.

On enquiry, we ascertained that the bungalow was Government property, but had fallen into disuse. It had been occasionally occupied

by the revenue officers on their visits to the district, and our friend the arrack-seller had been appointed to look after it.

After tiffin we started off on our shooting expedition in the direction of the village, which we visited at the invitation of the bazaar man. There was a temple there and a few Brahmins, who desired us on no account to shoot their pigeons, and the place appeared very peaceful and Arcadian. We bought some cocoa-nuts and lemons, and departed towards home, after having bagged a tolerable number of snipe and teal, and a bird which strongly resembled a woodcock. It was evening when we arrived at the sand-ridge, and the sun had lost its power, but the recollection of the morning's sufferings came over us when we gazed upon the dreary tract which we were about to retravel. There was the sea beyond, and the Hugh Lindsay was lying quietly at anchor about a quarter of a mile from the shore. We were covered with mud and damp through fording streams and wading

through pools, and all of us complained of fatigue; however, there was nothing for it, the journey must be performed, so we set about it with heavy hearts. Oh! how we envied those who were snugly on board the steamer!

When we got half the distance over the sands, we halted, and for some time amused ourselves by firing, whilst seated on the sand, at a mark set up at about twenty paces from us, and making bets upon each other's skill as marksmen. The red sky to the westward, however, soon warned us of night's approach, and hastened us on our way to the shore where the boat was waiting to convey us back on board; and thankful indeed were we when we again stood upon the steamer's deck.

On the next morning the troops came on board, and in due time we weighed and turned our course eastward for Maulmain. We had a fair, fine passage of four days and a half across the bay of Bengal, coming to anchor off Amherst on the evening of the fifth, being twelve days from Madras.

CHAPTER III.

Description of the Town of Maulmain and its Environs—
Picturesque Population—Domestic Manners of the
People—Costumes, &c.

As it was too late for us to proceed up the river on the evening of our arrival at Amherst, we remained off that village all night. Early on the following morning, the Government pilot came on board, and took charge of the vessel. The appearance of the coast from the sea is bold and picturesque. High mountains stretch along the sea-board far to the southward, while in the vicinity of Amherst itself, are several rocky islets, and one covered with vegetation, which has been named Green Island. The port of

Maulmain is about twenty-seven miles from the mouth of the river.

The town of Maulmain, the capital of the Tenasserim provinces, is situated at the junction of the Salween, Gyne, and Attaran rivers, in latitude 16 deg. 29 min. north, longitude 97 deg. 38 min. east, according to the chart consulted by Captain —, of the *Hugh Lindsay*.

Any verbal attempt at a description of the varied and beautiful scenery by which it is surrounded, would be altogether inadequate to convey to you any just conception of, perhaps, one of the most splendid panoramas in the world. A range of wooded hills forms one of the eastern boundaries of the town, and a long chain of mountains extends away in the interior to the southward, as far as the eye can reach. The summits of the hills which overlook the town and suburbs, are crowned with Buddhist pagodas, and from the site of either of these, a magnificent view of the surrounding country and the charming varieties of hill and dale,

river, field, and forest, which it presents, is opened out to the delighted gaze of the beholder. The ascent to any one of the several pagodas is rather fatiguing, owing to the steepness of the hills upon which they are situated, but a good road leads upwards, in a serpentine direction from the base of the hill, which is surmounted by the principal and largest pagoda, more than half-way towards its summit, gradually descending the other side till it joins the high road, leading to a suburb called Dine-woon-quin, at a village called Obo.

We came to anchor, or rather were "brought to our moorings," off the town, rather late in the day; but the morning after my arrival, I made an excursion to this pagoda, which visit well repaid all the labour and fatigue of the ascent. Flights of steps have been built of brick, which lead straight from the plains on either side to the spot occupied by this pagoda (which is a round pyramidal pile of solid masonry, something resembling a church steeple,

but of eccentric design, and gilded from about half-way from the base to the apex), but they are evidently of ancient construction, for the bricks appear to be crumbling from age, and many of the steps are broken away altogether; besides which, they are very steep and narrow, so that ascent by their means is difficult and more fatiguing, perhaps, than climbing up the hill side. From hence the spectator has a superb bird's-eye view of the town of Maulmain and the cantonments; the river, with its several green and picturesque islands clothed with luxuriant vegetation; the Martaban hills on the opposite shore of the Salween, and the distant Zillaat heights beyond; and to the eastward the fertile plains, terminated on one side by the waters of the Attaran, and on the other by the southern forest mountains. The pagoda itself is an object of considerable interest. It is said to be a very ancient structure, and is regarded by the Burmese with peculiar veneration, inasmuch as, in a vault beneath it, is supposed to be


deposited one of the hairs of the head of Guadama, the last of the incarnations of the deity ; the legend of whose existence in the flesh is thus related in the Damathat, or great work of Menoo, the Scripture of the Burmese.

“ In former times the king of a certain country had connection once with a woman, who watched a garden, and he gave her his ring, and told her if she had a daughter, to bring her up with the price of the ring, and if she had a son, to bring him to him. She had a son, and when he was three years old, as the king ordered, she took him to the king at the time he had a great dramatic entertainment, [*pooay*,] and said, ‘ This is my lord’s son ; I have brought him according to the royal order, and the ring he has, is my lord’s ring ;’ so she gave him over to the king, who, being ashamed, denied him. The woman said, ‘ My lord, take a very sharp sword, and if it be not my lord’s son, may he fall on the edge of it, and die ; if he be really my lord’s son, may he remain suspended

any other object about the place, unless treasure is buried under some or one of the shrines or pagodas, as it has been ascertained has been the case under similar temples elsewhere. Bells for the pagodas are made in Burmah by contributions from devotees of metals, of gold, silver, copper, brass, &c., according to the circumstances of the donors. These are thrown into the crucible, into which they are fused before being cast, and the ceremonies performed on the occasion of casting a bell, are of a particularly solemn and sacred character.

A little way on the declivities of the hill, a short distance from the pagodas and shrines aforesaid, are several kyongs, or monasteries (in which the poonghees, or priests, reside), and the gardens appertaining thereto. These devotees (like Roman catholic priests) are vowed to celibacy, and, being of the order of Brama-tsa-see, to poverty likewise. They subsist upon alms, any property that may accidentally

dama himself, in a recumbent posture, looking as if he had become fatigued by walking so far up the old brick stairs, and wanted to go to sleep. The carving of these figures (which are also painted) is elaborate; but the artistic skill displayed in the delineations of the faces and forms of the several divinities is of rather a peculiar character. All have the same arched eyebrows, and large intense black eyes, without any pupils, and the same orthodox noses, mouths, and heads of hair. A little more than a century ago (according to the authority of "the oldest inhabitant"), the pagoda was repaired and enlarged, and has remained to the present time without any further addition to its size. The upper part of the edifice, however, is frequently regilt, and the reflection of the sun's rays upon the glittering mass has sometimes a very dazzling effect. On the hill-top, near to this pagoda, is an immense bell, on which is an inscription in Talein characters, and this is probably of greater intrinsic value than



The town of Maulmain itself is not remarkable for its architectural beauties, nor for the excellence of the design upon which the ground whereon it stands has been laid out—if, indeed, any regular arrangement for the erection of a populous and important commercial town in this locality was ever planned. The main street, which is about three miles in length (from the division of Mounghan to that of Dine-woonquin) running parallel with the river-bank, is irregularly built, the houses being anything but uniform with one another in their construction. Most of these are of wood (except at the north end of the street for about a mile from the main wharf), and the lower apartments of the buildings are appropriated as shops or warehouses. There is an open square before the main wharf, on the north side of which is a spacious brick building, which comprises the offices of the Deputy Commissioner, Treasury, Master Attendant, Marine Store Keeper, and Collector of Customs. Nearly opposite to these

are several large puckha-houses, occupied by mercantile firms as offices and godowns. The other public buildings are of wood, with the exception of the Commissioner's Court-house, which is pleasantly situated in the suburban district of Tavoyzoo, a little way distant from the high road to Keoktan, at the base of one of the eastern boundary hills, and the gaol, an extensive building (or rather, set of buildings) erected on the declivity of one of the aforesaid hills, which is constructed entirely of brick, and is surrounded by a high wall. The European barracks and Native Infantry lines, within the cantonments, stand on the rise of a hill fronting the parade ground, upon which stands conspicuous the Anglican church of St. Matthias, an elegant wooden edifice, enclosed in a neat and prettily-arranged compound, forming altogether a pleasing ornament in the general details of a prospect, which possesses, besides, a variety of natural features calculated to render it exceedingly delightful. Within the cantonment are

situated, in convenient positions, the arsenal and commissariat, covering a large extent of ground, and the hospital and magazine. The latter, which is built on the rise of the Pagoda Hill, is bomb-proof, and capable of containing very large stores of ammunition. Close to the Anglican church is the Baptist chapel, a neat, wooden building; and farther on, next to the gaol, stand the Roman Catholic church of St. Patrick, and (in the same compound or inclosure) the Mission House and Convent. To the rear, at the foot of the hill, is the catholic burial-ground.

The private residences of the gentry in the suburbs of the town, are, for the most part, very delightfully situated in beautifully-arranged parks and gardens, generally on the declivities of the several eastern hills, and the drives in the vicinity of the town are at all seasons exceedingly lovely. The Commissioner's residence, an elegant mansion, situated on the brow of one of these hills, forms a remarkable object in the scenery of the place as viewed from the river.

It is surrounded by an extensive park, the arrangement of which reflects infinite credit to the taste of Sir Archibald Bogle, the designer and proprietor, wherein various valuable horticultural experiments have been essayed with very satisfactory results.

The population of Maulmain is calculated at about 24,000, exclusive of about a couple of thousand convicts in the gaol. Of these there are perhaps about 400 Europeans, and perhaps 3000 Eurasians, or half-castes. The rest consist of Burmese, Taliens, Chinese, Shans, Karens, Armenians, Jews, Malays, and natives of Hindostan, so that a great variety of costumes characteristic of the respective nations of the inhabitants are necessarily exhibited, and some of them are exceedingly picturesque.

The site of the town was selected by Sir A. Campbell at the termination of the Burmese war in 1826, as the best spot in the newly-acquired provinces from which to hold the Burmese in check, as well as on account of its being

the most convenient position for carrying on a trade with the interior, independently of its advantages as a commercial port. Ships drawing eighteen feet of water can proceed up with safety from Amherst (a small peninsula at the entrance of the river), under charge of pilots, to the town of Maulmain, above which the rivers are navigable for seventy miles, or thereabouts, by junks or other vessels drawing six feet water. The rise and fall of the tides at Maulmain at full and change is twenty-one feet, and the anchorage-ground off the town is excellent. The advantage of the position is so apparent, that in former days (most probably, it has been suggested, when the Portuguese took a part in the struggles of Pegu) it would seem not to have been overlooked, and the British troops found a spacious, irregular quadrangle on which to establish themselves, already surrounded by an earthen mound or rampart of considerable antiquity and large extent, the remains of which, at present, form the boundary or enclosure of the cantonment.

Great facilities for ship-building and repairing exist here, and a large number of fine vessels have, within the last few years, been launched from the building-yards of Tavoyzoo and Mopoon. At Mopoon the soil is laterite, and is admirably adapted for the formation of docks, as piling is unnecessary, and here there are already several, the largest belonging to Messrs. Dunbar and Co., and one at present unemployed, which did belong to a Mr. Mould, now deceased. Streams flow into the river in many places along its eastern shores in the vicinity of the town, which might easily be formed into backwaters, to keep the docks and gates clear of the mud that the river deposits everywhere.

On arriving I took up my residence at an hotel, at that time the only decent house of entertainment in the place, although there were a number of public houses along the Main Street, which were however patronized chiefly by sailors and some of the least reputable of the towns-

people. This hotel was an immense building constructed of wood, but was then unfinished. There was only one lodger staying there besides myself,—a Mormon preacher, who was allowed by the proprietor to remain free of charge. As I had to pay for what I consumed, and my sleeping apartment as well, I may mention that the charges to visitors were exorbitant, the accommodation bad, and I was besides perpetually annoyed by the din unceasingly continued by about half a score of the noisiest children I was ever tormented by in my life. The house was pleasantly situated in an open and healthy spot, close by the Court-houses, and will, I have no doubt, be a splendid building when completed; but it was in an unfinished state when I left.

The Burmese are a fine, stalwart race of men apparently, but their countenances are not by any means handsome, according to European notions of beauty. Their faces are broad, and somewhat resemble those of the Chinese. Small peculiarly shaped eyes wide apart, high cheek-

bones, and short noses. Generally their figures give one an idea of great strength. They exhibit plenty of muscle, are broad-shouldered and stout-limbed. Unlike the Indians, they appear to delight in exercising their physical capabilities. They are expert gymnasts, and are fond of wrestling and of competing with each other in games requiring extraordinary corporal exertion.

Nor is the idea which one entertains of their physical power dispelled on a closer acquaintance with their habits, avocations, and customs. There are comparatively very few Burmese who profess the more delicate mechanical arts. Of the male portion of the Burmese population of Maulmain, the majority amongst the labouring classes are sawyers, carpenters, or timber workers. But they are not considered an industrious people; at least the men are not. If a Burmese pater familias is a Prince over his household, the woman is the Prime Minister, and does all the work. She is invariably first Lord of the

Treasury, and Keeper of the Keys. Not unfrequently the Burmese wife trades on her own account, independently of her husband, in rice, in timber, in cattle and in goods. In the daytime you see a great many more Burmese women about the streets than you do men, and you may be sure that they are all bent upon business.

The prevailing complexion of the Burmese is rather a dark copper colour, but some of the women are almost as fair as the Europeans. I have seen several rather pretty women amongst them, but their dress which I shall describe directly, is unbecoming and indecent. The children are the queerest little animals I ever saw. They are suffered to run about *in puris naturalibus*, and they begin to smoke cheroots as soon as they are able to run about. All the Burmese, male and female, smoke, and chew *betel pauk*; which is the *paun* or *betel* leaf, over which a small quantity of *chunam*, or lime, is smudged, which is chewed in connection with

a piece of areka nut. This stuff colours the saliva a deep red, which they expectorate pretty freely, making rather an unsightly mess thereby wherever they go. At first the teeth of the betel chewer present a clear pinky white colour, very clean looking, and not at all disagreeable. Gradually lips and teeth become dyed a sort of brick-dust colour, which degenerates into a darker hue until the teeth get black and rotten, and look exceedingly repulsive. The men generally have no hair on their faces or breasts.

The costume of the Burmese varies according to the condition of the wearer. The wardrobe of a member of the labouring class is simple and inexpensive. It consists of a coloured cloth called a *putso* tied round the loins, which is sometimes suffered to hang down to the ankles, but is generally girded up between the thighs and fastened at the waist. The hair is permitted to grow as long as it will, except sometimes just over the ears and for about three quarters of an inch on the forehead, which parts

some of them keep close shaven. A piece of white or coloured cloth is folded into a sort of turban, and this is fastened on the top of the head by being tied with the long black hair. A Burmese cheroot, and the *tout ensemble* is complete. This is a tremendous affair. The tobacco leaf is rolled up and folded within a piece of palm leaf, and the cheroot altogether is about two inches in circumference. I don't know what the original length may be, but I suppose not less than six inches. Fancy children of two years old of both sexes, puffing away like young steam engines at things like these!

The more consequential natives, Gonngs, Myo Gyouns, Thoogyees, merchants and men in authority have the upper part of their bodies covered by means of a jacket or tunic of long cloth, linen, or woollen cloth, and wear putsoes and turbans of fine silk.

In the villages the women of the lower class are usually naked from the waist upwards. They wear a cloth called a *tameing*, which is

folded round the waist and fastened at the left side. This garment falls down nearly to the ankles, but being of scanty dimensions as regards width, nearly the whole of the right leg and thigh is exposed when walking. In towns the women wear, besides, a jacket which covers the arms and breasts. Ladies wear a sort of tunic to cover the upper part of their persons, and their tunings are of silk. They seldom wear any head dress. The hair is disposed *a la Chinois* sometimes, but generally a bunch about four inches long is suffered to hang down separately on each side of the face. The back hair is arranged in a cluster and fastened behind with a comb. It is usually fine, soft, glossy and luxuriant, but perfectly straight. Occasionally when any grand demonstration occurs, or at festivals, women wear gilt caps by way of ornament which just cover the roll, or knot, at the back of the head, or perhaps the knot is embellished by some device in gold and jewellery. The Burmese women are exceedingly fond of jewellery,

and all who can afford it, decorate their persons with glittering ornaments whenever opportunities for such displays occur.

During the north-east monsoon, the season of favourable weather, the river in the vicinity of Maulmain presents a pleasing and animated scene. The wide stream exhibits a vast number of large ships of various nations, and numerous boats are constantly plying to and fro between them and the shore. All the year round the traffic is considerable, and the trade of the port is annually increasing.

CHAPTER IV.

My Burmese preceptor.—Intercourse between Europeans and Burmese women.—Plays and entertainments.—Curious customs and amusements.—Traditions.—Creation of the world.—Missionaries.—Education of youth.

OF course, one of my first objects on arriving at Maulmain was to ascertain the nature of the chances existent there in favour of my employment in a suitable occupation. The appearance of the law courts was not calculated to impart to the stranger an idea of the dignity of the law, or the majesty of justice, but several parties to whom I had been introduced urged me strongly to practise as an advocate before the several legal tribunals of the province, and predicted for

me, in the event of my following their suggestion, an extensive and profitable business. After giving the matter due deliberation, and making all requisite enquiries regarding my eligibility and probabilities of success, I determined upon adopting the course recommended to me; but it was essential, as an ingredient of success, that I should endeavour to cultivate an acquaintance with the Burmese language, and, in pursuance of this object, I placed myself under the tuition of a native student of the American Mission School, an individual who rejoiced in the appellation of Shoay Tike. He was a very well-behaved youth, of about three-and-twenty years of age, but seemed to be rather too constrained in his demeanour for an instructor. He appeared to refrain from correcting those mistakes which are, of course, sure to be made by the learner at the commencement of his studies, from a fear of giving offence; and, indeed, he made very little improvement in this respect as our intercourse progressed.

Shoay Tike was rather good-looking for a Burman, and did not chew *betel pauk*, which circumstance I considered decidedly in his favour. He was of tolerably fair complexion, rather tall, and of a good figure. He was recommended to me by the Mormon missionary, to whom I have already referred as living in the same hotel with me, and who had certainly been a very diligent student, he having, in the short space of seven months, acquired a perfect colloquial knowledge of the vernacular.

I am of opinion, however, that the Burmese language is not to be acquired *thoroughly* by means of a teacher *solely*. The Mormon went about visiting the natives at their houses and huts, and familiarized himself with them. It would have been considered *infra dig.* in me to do so, but I neglected no opportunity of conversing with the natives, and of acquainting myself with their peculiarities. Some Europeans here are married to Burmese women, and some who are not married, have Burmese women at the head

of their respective households. Several whom I know have large families by such connections, and no one here objects to their society on the score of their immoral living.' A gentleman who had several marriageable daughters by a woman whom he had kept for many years, told me that Mah Twai (his lady) considered herself his wife to all intents and purposes, and that her countrymen and countrywomen did so likewise. I believe her friends considered her to be married to him *bond fide*, inasmuch as he made the parents a present of a sum of money on taking her from them, and, if he happened to eat in their house at the time of the contract (as it is more than likely he did), all the requisites of a Burmese wedding were complied with. As, therefore, according to their notions, there is nothing dishonorable or wrong in such a state of living, the relatives and friends of women so maintained are, in many instances, persons of wealth and respectability, and, of course, are upon visiting and perfectly friendly terms with

them, and so, through Nga Shoay Tike, and one or two of my friends who were situated as I have intimated, I contrived to contract some rather desirable Burmese acquaintanceships, and was often invited as a guest at some of their feasts, entertainments, and jollifications.

The general character of the Burmese, evidently, is naturally gay and careless: they are easily pleased, and indulge in their love of pleasure on every available opportunity. Comedies, dances, and other entertainments (all included under the general designation of *pooays*) are perpetually being got up by the wealthier inhabitants of various districts about Maulmain, and, as these are held in open places adjacent to large thoroughfares, and as casual spectators have nothing to pay, the company which assembles to witness the performances, if not particularly select, is always numerous.

The most popular description of *pooay* (or play) is represented by means of marionettes or puppets, and the motions of these

figures are managed very cleverly by persons situated beneath a stage, which is erected for the occasion, and covered in by a coarse curtain, after the manner of the Punch and Judy and Fantocini shows, once so popular in London streets. The dialogues between these fictitious personages are of such a nature as to induce the most obstreperous merriment amongst the audience, and even to a stranger unacquainted with the language, the attitudes into which the puppets are thrown, the broad grins displayed by the spectators, and the loud, hearty laughter which constantly bursts forth amongst them, combine to produce an effect so irresistibly comic, that you are forced to join in the cachinnations of the multitude, in spite of your inability to understand the points of wit or humour which elicit such uproarious mirth.

Some of the Burmese plays are represented by professional actors, generally in the open air, not upon a stage, but in a circle, in the centre of which a blazing fire is kindled, in order, I

suppose, to throw a light upon the subject of the dramas enacted, which might otherwise be incomprehensible, the development of the tender passion, in various phases, almost invariably forming the basis of the plot, and the characters, male and female, being always represented by men. The principal *dramatis personæ* of every play performed consist of a prince, a princess, a humble lover, a slave, and a buffoon. The prince and the princess are attired in the most extravagantly gorgeous style, and glitter in tinsel literally from head to foot. The inferior characters wear simply the native putso and the common head-dress, a white or figured cloth intertwined with the hair into a sort of top-knot. The sentimentality of the supposed wooers in these pieces is immensely funny, and I have laughed at their love scenes until my very sides and cheeks have ached from the unwonted exertion.

The musical instruments used on these occasions, consist of a sort of tambourine, a banjo,

a small drum, and an oblong hollow box, which appears to be made out of a log of wood, about three feet long, and ten inches in breadth, rounded off towards the bottom and ends, a flat sounding board covering the top, the wires being screwed tightly at both ends, and raised about three quarters of an inch from the body of the instrument. Before this the performer squats himself, resting on his haunches, and the different notes are elicited by striking the wires with sticks, something resembling those used in playing the harmonicon. Besides these, the triangle is occasionally introduced, and a wind instrument similar to a fife. I have also seen bells brought in to complete the orchestra; but I believe the four first-mentioned instruments constitute the whole band on ordinary occasions.

The Burmese are fond of practical jokes, and their new year is ushered in with numerous illustrations of this disagreeable propensity, from the demonstrations of which few are

fortunate enough to escape. A stranger in the country, too, would be likely to be ignorant of the precise day on which their new year begins. The exact time of the commencement of the Burmese year ought to be the instant on which the sun is supposed to enter Aries; and this they determine by certain arithmetical calculations, which, by all accounts, would seem to be rather defective in principle. There was an inauguration of the new year in 1856 for instance, early in the month of April; whereas, according to correct astronomical principles, the event should have been celebrated somewhere about the middle of March of that year, when the sun did enter Aries. However, as the Burmese men of science, the poonghees, astrologers, and savans of all sorts decide the matter according to some antique arithmetical rule instead of by any correctly ascertained scientific method, it is probable the error will go on increasing annually, unless the authorities in time to come take the trouble to set them right.

As it is, a stranger not aware of the time nor of the custom, finds himself astonished on walking through the Maulmain streets on a Burmese New Year's Day, at encountering the continual showers of water that he gets thrown over him from unknown sources, in the course of his pedestrian journey. For some days previously, the Burmese men, women, and children, are employed in making syringes from the bamboo, and collecting large pots to contain water, which reservoirs are usually stationed at the doors of their houses. The children derive great amusement from the use of these weapons, and, as may be conjectured, employ them very assiduously; but the nuisance is considerably increased in consequence of the observance of the ancient custom by those of larger growth, and the stupid practice is allowed to continue unchecked on the score, I suppose, of its antiquity, which has made it venerable. A local writer, who did the paragraphs for the little advertising sheet which the people at Maulmain call a newspaper, writing of this festival, remarked, that "on this day the

Burmese of all ages and sexes suspend, in a great measure, their ordinary pursuits, and yield themselves up to the amusements which the recurrence of the season usually suggests. Old men and women," he observes, poetically, "are but children of a larger growth, and must have their holidays and recreations—paint a green spot on the fading leaf, and call up the buoyant spirits which the cares inflicted by mature years too often and too much depress." As I had not escaped with a dry exterior, I could not help thinking, on reading that effusion, that it would be more agreeable a good deal, if the Burmese of both sexes would refrain from painting "the green spot" so touchingly alluded to, in water colours, or in any case if they would confine their recreations during their holidays to facetious experiments upon their own countrymen, who are not usually expensively clothed.

The men delight in games of dexterity, which are accompanied with corporal exercise, and are very expert at football and hockey. They are

active, supple, graceful, and manly, in their movements, and pursue their out-door recreations with great good humour and merriment. But what would strike a stranger particularly, perhaps, is the national propensity for swinging. In every enclosure there is to be seen a swing, with the longest possible range, rigged up to a couple of trees, or to some strong outstretching branch, and one is to be seen in the verandah of every Burman's house. The seat of the swing is constantly occupied, either by man, woman, or child, during the whole of the day. Women nurse babies in swings, the back and forward motion of the swing acting soporifically upon the infant.

The traditions of the Burmese regarding the creation of the world and its connection with the universal system, are interesting as forming the basis of a religion which is professed by a very large proportion of the inhabitants of the globe. "I worship," says Menoo, "the God who is worthy of homage; who

possesses an intuitive knowledge of good"—and the laws revealed to the Bramin recluse in the solitudes of the wilderness, through divine inspiration, are alleged to have been presented by him, written on golden palm-leaf, to King Maha Thamada, for universal adoption, as Moses submitted the commandments of God, engraved on the tablets of Sinai, for the recognition and guidance of the children of Israel.

The account of the creation of the world and its early condition, is thus described in the Dammathat :—

“In the Melinda peynea, it is recorded that the present Budda world came into existence after previously existing worlds had been seven times destroyed by fire, and once by water.” I enquired of Shoay Tike what the Melinda peynea is ; but the only information I could get from him was, that it is something concerning which only the most learned theologians have any knowledge. However, to proceed :—

“When this dwelling-place of animals was

about to come into existence, the dwellings of the Bymahas that had been destroyed, beginning with the highest, according to their order, and the four countries of the Ngats, rose forth. After this the waters continued to decrease, till they reached the place where this world of earth was to assume existence, the wind having confined the waters as water is confined in a wine-taster when the end is closed." So that as the ancient Greeks believed the present world was formed after the Oxygian Deluge, the Burmese are taught to believe that on the subsidence of the waters appeared this earth of trees and flowers. "A portion of something," the tradition runs, "with an excellent taste and smell, like the food of the Ngats, in appearance like the soft skin which forms on the top of boiled milk with which no water has been mixed, in form like a lotus leaf, sprang up upon the surface of the water. After this appeared the earth where the God was to manifest himself. The site of the Bodi-tree first of all came into exist-

ence ; and when the world is destroyed it will be the last to disappear. On this earth a small padungma lotus, an omen of what was to come, sprung up. In any world in which no God is to appear, this lotus does not flower ; but in worlds in which Gods will appear, it bears flowers equal in number to the number of Gods who are to come. By this the great Bymahas know whether it will be a Thara, a Manda, a Warra, a Warra-thara-manda, or a Badda-Kap."

I am unable to explain this classification of deities, or to describe the relationship which exists in the Buddhist pantheon between a Thara and a Badda-Kap ; and unfortunately Shoay Tike (who had renounced Buddhism for Christianity) was unable to enlighten me upon the subject. I must likewise confess my inability to comprehend exactly the latter part of the quotation altogether. I can only assure the reader that it is a literal translation ; but as for the true interpretation of the text, not having graduated as a professor of Burmese

theology, my plea of ignorance may be held valid.

“In a world in which a God is to appear, the Bymahas take the eight utensils of a priest,* which are in the lotus; and Bymahas, whose term of life is ended, or whose stock of merit in that state is exhausted, having died, appear in the country of men at once in perfect form. These, by the mere resplendent effulgence of

* The eight utensils of a priest are—

1st. The Dookok, or double yellow cloth folded over the shoulders.

2nd. The Koyong, or single yellow cloth passed over them.

3rd. The Thabaing, or single yellow cloth worn round the loins, which falls down to the feet.

4th. The Khaban, or cord for tying the thabaing round the waist, which are called the four inner articles, and are never separated from the body. The outer utensils consist of—

5th. The Thabick, or begging-pot, into which the food is put.

6th. The water-dipper.

7th. The needle.

8th. The razor for shaving the head.

their bodies, are lighted as in the Bymaha country, and by their happiness alone is their appetite for food satisfied. Like birds flying in the expanse of the heavens, they enjoy themselves. There is no sign of man or woman, no development of sexual organs amongst them. They are called generally 'beings.' When these beings put forth their strength to eat the flavoured earth, the effulgence of their bodies was extinguished ; but either by their power or because it had uniformly been so, the sun, with an interior entirely of gold and an exterior of glass, fifty yeuzenahs in diameter, and one hundred and fifty in circumference, called Banoo Yudza, which has one thousand colours or rays, on Sunday the full moon of Tabaung, rose on the top of the centre hill of the eastern island, and it became light. The people by this having got rid of their fears and become courageous, called it (the sun) Thoorea. When this King of Day had gone round for thirty hours, he was concealed behind the Eugando hill, and it became

quite dark. These original people of the world all wished for some kind of light ; and the moon with an interior entirely of rubies, and an exterior of silver, forty-nine yeuzenas in diameter, and one hundred and forty-seven in circumference, shining with serene radiance, with the twenty-seven constellations, and the other stars surrounding them, made their appearance in Kan-ya-thee (the zodiacal sign of Tabaung) in the east, riding on the constellation Hathada of thirteen stars. The first people were all delighted, and as they had got the moon according to their desire, they called it Tsanda. Thus the sun and moon were made manifest. At this time the original inhabitants of the world all ate the pleasant-flavoured earth. Some amongst them became handsome, and some ill-favoured. The handsome behaved with insulting haughtiness to the ill-favoured. Having eaten the flavoured earth for a long time, the passions of covetousness and enmity took possession of them, and the flaky earth disappeared. When this

had gone, a creeper called padalatha, perfect in smell and flavour, was produced ; and when in the same way (by bad passions) it was lost, thalay rice was put in a stone cup, without any apparent cause flames came, and it was cooked. In appearance it was like the flower of the jasmine. Fruit, meats, and other kinds of food came according to the people's taste."

"The first kinds of food, like the food of the Ngats, appeased hunger, and afforded nourishment to the body ; and being of a mild nature, no excrement was formed ; but when they came to eat the thalay rice, it being a coarse substance, the passages for the urine and fœces were formed ; the male and female sexual organs were developed, and the male and female sexes became evident in all. Then the males looked on the females, the females on the males, and thus sexual desires inflamed all, and sexual intercourse took place universally. Wise men reviled and opposed these degrading practices. To be free from this, and to conceal their bad deeds, they built

houses, lived within enclosures, and following each other's example, secured a supply of food. On their doing this, coarse and fine husks came on the rice, and it did not spring up again where it had been cut from. Seeing this, the original inhabitants of the world said : ' In former times we were satisfied by our state of Zan ; happiness was our only food, and the resplendence of our bodies our only light. We flew in the expanse of heaven. Then we ate of the flavoured flakes of the padalatha creeper. This food, on account of our bad deeds, disappeared ; and after this, the thalay rice, of its own accord (without our labour) was produced ; and now the thalay rice, by reason of our securing the morning and evening meal at once, does not spring up to replace what has been taken, but only in patches.' So they consulted together that it would be good to give each a share, and mark it off, and they did so. After this, a loose fellow, fearing his own share would be consumed, stole and ate a share of another. This he repeated once

or twice. The owners scolded and let him go. The third time they beat him. From that time theft, lying, reviling, and punishment became rife. This being the case, the original inhabitants of the world assembled and took council together, that, as bad practices had become common, they should give command to an honest man of good principles, and make him king; that he should revile those who ought to be reviled, banish those who should be banished; and that they should give him one-tenth of their thalay rice. After this consultation, there was a man, a para-loung (an embryo Boodah), just in all his proportions beyond other men, and perfect in his members, of most excellent power and sanctity, and great wisdom, who could degrade or exalt. Having gone to this man, they preferred their request, and anointed him, calling him Maha Thamada; because he was thought by many worthy to be chosen; and because he had dominion over the land, he was called Kattea; and because he was capable of instruct-

ing men according to the laws, he was called Yaza; and these three names became well known."

The legend then goes on to say that Maha Thamada, seeing the necessity of classing his subjects, divided them into castes, the highest (after the king) being those who eschewed evil works, and lived piously in huts of leaves and branches in the jungle, supporting themselves by begging in towns and villages which were under a king, who were called Bymanah, or Bramins. Then districts, cities, villages, and towns were marked out, but the people were dissatisfied, and disputes arose; "when," says the text, "a cow-herd of about seven years of age, who had died in Bymah country, and been born in this world, commencing with his little companions, could speak to the satisfaction of men and women, old and young, in his village. At this time, people having disputes came to him," and the laws of Menoo were framed from the decisions which he then gave, and which the Ngats of the forest applauded, which he subsequently enunciated when

he was elected a noble and a judge, and which were finally written on the golden palm leaf, so that all mankind might know them.

Generally speaking, I should not take the Burmese to be a very piously inclined people. The organ of veneration, I imagine, is not one of their prominent phrenological peculiarities. I have seen an occasional devotee kneeling about half way up the ascent to the great pagoda, as if in supplication, but I am inclined to think that as a general rule the laity prefer leaving the greater portion of their devotional duties to be performed by proxy of the priesthood. Notwithstanding their apparent want of zeal, however, it is certain that generally they are by no means disposed to apostatise. They have an abiding faith in the genuineness of the doctrines taught them by the poonghees, and are slow to renounce the religion of their fathers for any other creed. A missionary once told me that he was much afraid that in nine cases of so called "conversion to Christianity" out of every ten in

Burmah, there is very little of real sincerity in the neophyte ; and that, as regards the Burmese, many who had lived for years as professed Christians had eventually recanted, and become finally reconciled to the Buddhist faith.

The poonghees evidently possess great influence over the minds and conduct of the people, and this influence has not unfrequently been exerted in regard to political matters to a very baneful extent. During the last war, the Maulmain priesthood were discovered to be in communication with the enemy at Martaban, and signal fires were once or twice detected burning on the Greet Pagoda hill. This influence is, after all, perhaps, not surprising. The poonghees have the instruction of the rising generation, and it is natural for youth to respect and venerate their teachers. This respect and veneration does not usually diminish with age. Early impressions, if they are at all deep, are, in most instances, enduring, and the power which the priest exercises over the mind of the child, is

generally very apt to sway the affections of the man.

The most assiduous Christian missionaries there are of denominations very much opposed to each other in regard to doctrinal points. They are the Roman Catholics and the American Baptists. The Church of England Missionary Society has no establishment in Burmah, neither have the Wesleyans nor the Scotch Presbyterians. One of the E.I.C.'s chaplains officiated as minister of St. Matthias's and station chaplain, and he used to make a visitation tour once a year, I believe, to the Southern Provinces of Tavoy and Mergui. There is a school in the cantonment subject to the chaplain's supervision, but (with the exception of St. Matthias' Church) there is no place consecrated or devoted to the Church of England worship throughout the province.

The Roman Catholics have two churches in Maulmain,—St. Patrick's and St. John's. The former is the largest, and there the sermons are preached in English. In the latter, the natives

are exhorted in their own language. There is also an orphanage, and an excellent school attached to the mission. But the labours of these missionaries are not confined to one locality. There are a large number of priests attached to the Burman mission, and these are distributed in various parts of the country. Their allowance is barely sufficient to clothe and feed them, and their perseverance in the cause of their religion is exemplary. They have been, I believe, very successful at Ava and in other parts of the Burmese territory, and have established schools and churches wherever they have been enabled to do so.

The American missionaries have several places of worship in the town and suburbs, and they, too, have spread their influence over an extensive tract of country. The work, ably commenced, piously prosecuted, and earnestly persevered in to the day of his death, by the good Dr. Judson, has been zealously continued by bands of energetic men who strive to emulate

the example of so excellent a pioneer. Every American missionary in Burmah, in order to qualify himself for his vocation, has to perfect himself in the language, not only of the Taliens, but of the Karens (or hill people) likewise, not merely colloquially, but in a knowledge of their letters as well. The language (I do not write from my own experience, but on the authority of a professed scholar) is not by any means easy of acquisition, to read, write, and speak it correctly. The written character is peculiar in construction, intricate in detail, and puzzling to the comprehension even of the expert, unless very clearly executed. Yet these missionaries are required to master all the difficulties that beset them in the pursuit of their object, and to be able to read and translate the Scriptures and preach to the natives of the country in their own language, with accuracy and eloquence.

I believe the Baptists consider that they have been more successful amongst the Karens in the

work of conversion than among other classes of natives. I do not know how this is to be accounted for, unless it is that poonghee influences do not extend themselves so much towards the hill tribes as towards those who inhabit the villages of the plains. Their schools in Maulmain number a great many pupils, male and female, of all classes, without reference to considerations of nationality. Children of the Chuliah, Mahomedan, Bramin, and Pariah castes are admitted as well as the Burmese, and there are also schoolrooms in which the children of parents who can afford to pay for their education are instructed.

I have already intimated certain doubts regarding the sincerity of Burmese proselytes to Christianity; but it is impossible not to foresee the good that must eventually result from such exertions as these missionaries, Catholic and Baptist, are making in the country. Setting religious considerations (for the present) entirely on one side, the Burmese are convinced of the temporal ad-

vantages which accrue to their children from instruction in the language of the people who rule over them, and in the various branches of learning taught them in their schools. Comparing the amount of benefit which is nearly certain to be achieved as the result of an English education with the spiritual advantages likely to be derived by means of the lessons inculcated in a poonghee kyoung, the worldly wisdom of a Burmese mother is not slow in deciding in favour of the Christian school. As they acquire a knowledge of our language, and have learned to appreciate some of the beauties of the Christian system, the young minds of the pupils will be more susceptible to receive the religious impressions which it is the aim of the Christian missionary to inculcate, and, doubtless, in many instances, these early impressions, grafted in the sapling, are productive of good fruit when the tree is grown and the branches are spreading around the trunk.

Each of the missions have their printing offices, but the operations of the Catholic press

are confined entirely to the religious publications which emanate from that body, and the work of the mission, their establishment not being large enough to enable them to undertake business of a miscellaneous character ; but the American missionaries do a considerable amount of trade as printers and publishers of books, pamphlets, &c., doubtless to the great advantage of their exchequer.

CHAPTER IV.

Account of the Great Fire at Maulmain in 1854—Other
Fires.

DURING the month of April following my arrival, a dreadful fire occurred at Maulmain, of which I reported the particulars at the time, whilst the scene of conflagration was vividly before “my mind’s eye,” and which account I here transcribe:—

“Nearly the whole of that part of the town comprising the districts (or divisions) of Myan-goon and Tavoyzoo has been devastated, and it is reported that several human beings have perished in the flames.

“I was seated in my room writing when I heard

the alarm, and on looking out of window I observed a number of people running from the court-house towards the road which runs past the hotel in the direction of Myangoon. It was mid-day, and the thermometer at 90°. Nevertheless, I put on a solar hat, and rushed down stairs. I found the landlord at the door, in a state of great excitement, shouting out some directions to the people about him. He is an Englishman, small in person, but very wiry and muscular. He had nothing on but a striped shirt, tucked up at the sleeves, trowsers, shoes and stockings, and an old straw hat. He hurriedly informed me that he was going to pull down some houses.

“When I got outside of the house I saw a body of flame and smoke to the southward that appeared to me to be unpleasantly near to the premises I had just quitted. However, as the hotel is situated on an open spot within a wide inclosure, the establishment perhaps was tolerably safe from harm, especially as the wind just then was blowing from an opposite quarter to

that from which danger might have been apprehended. The wind, however, being generally variable during this month, was considered untrustworthy, and the inmates were already preparing for the possible necessity of a hasty retreat.

“I followed the crowd that was pressing on towards the scene, my landlord accompanying me, and in a few minutes we were within a dozen yards or so of a row of burning houses, which proved to be about a quarter of a mile from the hotel.

“Whereabouts the fire commenced, of course we could not learn then, and I believe that all the exertions of the executive have been unsuccessful in discovering the cause and place of its origination. When we got to that part of the burning town which was nearest to the point from whence we started, there must have been about three hundred houses in flames over an area of somewhere about half a mile square. I can give you no idea of the heat

which prevailed in the vicinity with the thermometer, as I have said before, at 90°, and a fire like that raging furiously about us.

“I have already told you, that the houses in and about Maulmain are principally constructed of wood. Along the main street the buildings are chiefly *tiled*, but in the bye streets (except perhaps in that part of the town which is the most densely populated) the roofing is composed of the dried leaves of the Palmyrah tree, a description of thatch which renders a house exceedingly comfortable in all seasons, since it does not retain nor reflect the heat in the dry weather, and is impervious to rain. This thatch in dry weather is very inflammable, and when a fire occurs in localities where houses roofed with this description of material are at all numerous and near to each other, it spreads with fearful rapidity, progressing from roof to roof as it would over touch-paper. In such cases the only plan to arrest the course of the flames is to pull down houses enough to prevent the possibility of the

fire extending over the vacant space caused by the demolition of such houses. My landlord was away from my side directly we came up to the scene of action, and a minute or two afterwards I saw him on the roof of a Burman house some short distance off, pulling off the thatch with the most praiseworthy vigour and perseverance, although the flames were raging within about forty yards of him, and pieces of burning thatch were being blown about on every side. His example, I was happy to observe, was soon followed by a number of European soldiers who assisted him in his work, and the house upon which he had singly commenced operations was rased to the ground in an incredibly short space of time. No sooner was that business accomplished, than he set about the demolition of the next house, and as the occupants had already vacated the edifice, and had transported their chattels to a safer spot, he encountered no opposition in his endeavours. He was assisted in this by some more Europeans, and that house

was very speedily levelled : so he and his auxiliaries went on until a space was cleared quite wide enough to prevent the extension of the mischief in that particular quarter.

“I made my way as well as I could through streets which admitted of a safe passage until I arrived at a broad space covered with black, smoking heaps of ruins, above which towered the skeletons of many charred and still smouldering trees. There was no fear of the element doing immediate injury beyond this spot. A number of Burmese were about there, looking rather anxiously among the embers where they could tread without incurring personal damage. Perhaps they sought to find some stray domestic trifles uninjured in the wreck of their homes ; or, as is likely enough, perhaps they were there upon the speculation of finding some portions of the property of other people which might possibly have escaped the general destruction, and which haply might reward the labour of the search.

“ People about the streets in the vicinity, as yet

untouched by the fire, were busy enough. Many were packing up their household wares, and the thoroughfares were choked up completely with articles of furniture, cooking utensils, and bundles of clothes. If a fire-engine happened to pass through that way, the confusion was terrific; the scramble to clear a passage being productive of the wildest disorder, and no inconsiderable damage occasionally, both to person and property.

“It struck me as being somewhat remarkable that the Burmese seemed to content themselves with removing their goods and chattels out of their houses, without making any attempt to transport them away from the neighbourhood. They appeared to consider their property in imminent peril when beneath the roofs of their houses, but comparatively safe when just outside their doors. It is needless to say that the danger to surrounding houses was infinitely greater when the narrow streets were choked up with bedsteads, boxes, benches and other similar

articles, than if the space between the rows of wooden buildings had been kept perfectly clear.

“ When, too, the Burman had got his chattels out of his house, he evidently imagined he had done everything that was required of him, and he would sit himself down on a chest, puff away at his cheroot, and contemplate matters complacently, indeed regarding the whole business as rather a good joke than otherwise. The circumstance that he would be rendered shelterless if the fire were to reach his dwelling, did not seem to occasion him the least anxiety or concern.

“ There were about half a dozen engines employed during the continuance of the conflagration, which were manned and worked under the directions of the executive authorities of the place. Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Magistrate, Joint Magistrate, Head Constable and Goungs of divisions were all in different places about the scene of disaster, some on horseback and some on foot,

issuing their mandates and endeavouring to preserve order amongst the crowd.

“ Every bucket that could be obtained was put into requisition for filling the engines with water, which was procured from different wells that were accessible ; as many houses in Maulmain have a well on the premises, and public wells are likewise numerous about the town. This being the dry season however, the wells unfortunately did not yield a very plentiful supply, and in some parts of Tavoyzoo where the fire was raging, it was found very difficult to procure water in any quantity. The police took possession of buckets indiscriminately for the purpose required, without much reference to claims of ownership, and natives were pressed to aid in the work of demolishing contiguous houses, of working the engines, and of supplying them with water. It was astonishing the aversion which the Burmese manifested to this compulsory labour. Every expedient to skulk out of the obligation, that ingenuity could suggest, was

resorted to, and numerous were the attempts made at desertion. In some instances the demonstrations of repugnance were rather ludicrous in their development. One fellow hid himself under some gunny bags which were piled indiscriminately outside of a Chinaman's store, but was discovered when the Chinaman deemed it expedient to remove his property to a safer spot. At first, when he was hauled out and ordered to do duty at the pumps of an engine, the fellow's countenance wore an expression of deep chagrin, but directly he saw people around grinning at his discomfiture, he appeared to consider the circumstance rather funny likewise, and joined very cheerfully in the merriment of the bystanders.

“ During the continuance of the fire, a few of the occupants of houses situated in the most dangerous positions, manifested considerable terror and anxiety. It would happen sometimes that there were young children to be got out of the way, and perhaps some valuable property had

to be removed. In some instances but little time was available for the removal of goods, or even for self preservation. A good many men, women, and children, had to fly expeditiously from their houses empty-handed, fortunate even in escaping unharmed in person, for houses constructed of timber and thatched with such material as I have named, are very quickly consumed by the destroying element, which continues its remorseless career from house to house, as I have before said, with fearful rapidity. Some notion of the alarming nature of such a fire as that of yesterday may be formed from the fact that in this instance, in the short space of three quarters of an hour, upwards of three hundred houses were entirely consumed by the flames, and many hundreds of people were thus in a very brief space of time left houseless. The Burmese however are pretty well used to fires, and when such accidents do occur, are wonderfully fertile in resources. I went early this morning to view the site of the calamity. It presented a most

singular appearance; like a wild encampment. Hundreds of huts had been constructed of bamboos and matting, and on the spot which was yesterday morning a populous and thriving district, the inhabitants, dispossessed of their houses, were sheltering themselves beneath those rude, unsubstantial, and hastily constructed tenements. The whole scene appeared indescribably forlorn and melancholy, and I thought the dead and blackened trees added considerably to the mournful character which this dark spectacle of ruin presented.

“Shoay Tike, however, assures me that it will not be very long before the space now levelled by the fire will be covered with new dwellings. Timber is fortunately easily obtained, and is comparatively cheap. The Burman will labour with his own hands to raise a roof to shelter himself and family. Some difficulty, it is thought, may arise in regard to the allotments claimed by the various grant holders, and many attempts will very probably be made by some greedy

ground proprietors to encroach upon the territories of their neighbours. Such disputes invariably result in appeals to the legal tribunals of the province, for the Burmese delight in litigation, especially when their fancy for "law" can be indulged in cheaply; but perhaps the commissioner will order a fresh survey to be made, and a final division of boundaries, which will obviate any difficulty on the score of ground rights.

" Conflagrations have ever since the formation of the settlement been of very frequent occurrence. Before the war of 1852, fires were sometimes attributed to incendiaries from the Martaban side, who, it was supposed, came over and applied their torches, in order to obtain facilities for plunder; but annually since the proclamation of peace and the annexation of Martaban to our territories, fires almost as extensive as that of yesterday have devastated large portions of the town, and yet the most persevering enquiries have failed to elicit anything elucidatory of the

causes creative of such disasters. Probably the carelessness of the Burmese (which is one of the proverbial peculiarities of the national character,) may not unfrequently have occasioned their origination. I have myself seen a Burman place his lighted cheroot in very dangerous proximity to the thatch of the roofing, and when it is considered that a mere spark communicating with those dry inflammable leaves is likely to induce an immediate blaze, if fanned by the slightest puff of wind, the occurrence of a very destructive fire under such circumstances would not be at all surprising. The cooking places too belonging to Burman houses are generally in low sheds contiguous to the main building, which are also roofed with the same description of thatch, but in most cases more loosely and carelessly fixed over the thin bamboo lath-work.

“ One effect of this fire will be to increase the price of timber and tiles, shingles and leaves for roofing. At this season of the year, dried

Palmyrah leaves are in great demand, for it is usual to newly thatch the roofs of dwelling-houses before the rainy weather sets in. It has sometimes been conjectured (and not without some show of reason) that these fires are kindled by persons interested in the importation and sale of leaves, which are brought in large quantities from the southern provinces, this supposition being partly supported by the fact that in most cases of the kind, different places, widely apart from each other, are indicated to the police, as those in which the fires commenced. If any plan of incendiarism really is organized on such occasions, it is possible, that in order to divert suspicion from any one particular spot, it may be contrived that, at a certain moment several houses may be fired simultaneously; but it seems impossible to ascertain the correct cause of the origin of such disasters.

“ It is of course, at present, also impossible to ascertain with anything like an approach to certainty, the extent of damage to property oc-

casioned by this calamity. It must have been immense. An Armenian in Tavoyzoo is known to be a sufferer to the extent of 30,000 rupees, and one Chinaman is poorer by half-a-lackh than he was yesterday morning. Three persons are missing; a woman, a lad of sixteen, and a little girl; it is supposed that they have perished in the flames, and I think there can be little doubt but they have. As yet, however, the bodies have not been discovered in the still smouldering ruins."

Since the occurrence above described, another destructive conflagration took place in the same locality, indeed over a great portion of the very ground traversed by the former fire. This had the effect of instigating a general order that within the limits of certain districts (the populous portions of the town), all houses shall have roofs of tiles or shingles, and the use of leaf-thatching has been strictly interdicted. At first the operation of this order occasioned considerable distress, but it has been persevered

in. The ground was subjected to another survey, the grants held by landholders being altered to accord with the intention of the authorities to widen many of the thoroughfares, and to insist upon sufficient space being allowed between house and house. The effect of this has been not only the prevention of such extensive and dangerous fires, but of considerably improving the appearance and character of the town.

CHAPTER VI.

Description of my house.—Domestic servants.—Marketing.—The bazaar.—Articles of food.—Prejudices of the people.—Cloth merchants.—Extortionate shopkeepers.

THE south-west monsoon usually commences to be felt on the Burmese coast about the latter end of April. On the first season of my residence in Maulmain, the change was heralded by a storm of wind such as I had never before encountered in the whole course of my travels—a whirlwind which uprooted large trees, unroofed strongly-built houses, drove stately vessels from their moorings in the river, and destroyed private property to a considerable extent. This

was followed by a downfall of rain which threatened to absolutely swamp the unfortunate inhabitants of the valley of the Salween, myself included.

As soon as I saw myself in a fair way of proceeding prosperously with my business, it became desirable that I should remove from my lodgings in the hotel, and set up housekeeping on my own account. I soon made arrangements for the tenancy of a neat cottage, in a convenient situation, which I had suitably furnished, and as some of my domestic experiences may not be unentertaining, I will proceed to record a few for the behoof of such of my readers as may have it in contemplation to visit the country themselves.

Domestic servants there are either Bengalees or natives of the Madras coast. The latter are the most numerous, and, as a body, emigrant Madrasees are the veriest rascals in creation. The most respectable of them will cheat and steal if they can do so safely. But a good many of them addict themselves to habits of intempe-

rance, and an Indian drunkard will plunder his employer without regard to possible consequences. A Burman will not work in any menial capacity for a European ; but the women occasionally engage as children's nurses. A Burman will have no objection to light a fire for you, or draw your water, or chop sticks, or bear burthens ; but he will object to be your *valet de chambre*, or to wait at your table, or polish your knives and forks. A Burman is not a servile creature. In the very meanest there is nothing apparent of the spirit of flunkeyism. The Indian is servile, whatever be his station ; and servility, in his case, I am sorry to say, is too generally associated with baseness and dishonesty. I had two servants in my house, a butler and a cook, and both were Madrasees. The butler was well recommended to me, so I engaged him on the faith of a fair report. On entering on his duties he gave me an inventory of all the things that were in the house under his charge, and for those he was responsible. The butler recommended the cook.

Besides those, I had a *mehtur*, or *toty* (*anglice* scavenger), whose duty it was twice daily to sweep my house out and remove rubbish and offal, and a *Peon*, or *Peardah*, a sort of *aide de camp*, who announced visitors and carried messages, dusted my bookshelves, and kept my library in order.

Early in the morning my butler would go to the bazaar to procure the commissariat stores for the day. One is obliged to leave all arrangements appertaining to this department of domestic management to the servants in that country. It is true they profit considerably by the commission ; but the chances are ten to one against your catering for yourself upon more advantageous terms, irrespective of the loss of time which would be involved by your becoming your own provider. There is an evident understanding between the bazaar dealers and domestic servants, and if a European goes to make purchases, he will find it difficult to obtain the articles he wants, even so cheaply as he obtains

them through the agency of his butler or cook. I had been long enough resident in India to be thoroughly alive to this fact; nevertheless, I determined upon going to the bazaar on the first morning after I had taken possession of my new premises, just to give myself some idea as to the state of the market, so that my servants might not be able to bleed me to any very serious extent.

The principal market in Maulmain, (the *Burra Bazaar* as it is called), is situated in the Main street towards the northern end of the town. A small creek runs beneath one portion of the bazaar, travelling some short distance inland, which the street crosses, over a bridge. The river bounds the bazaar on the west side, and is of course the receptacle for as much of the offal collected there daily as may be swept away into its waters. The chief entrance to the bazaar is just on the south side of the bridge. Externally it looks like a low wooden shed with a tiled roof, and gives one no idea whatever of

extent or importance. When, however, the stranger gets inside, his sensations are those of surprise and bewilderment, especially if his first visit happens to be made at about six or seven o'clock in the morning.

I have said that in Burmah one is obliged to leave commissariat arrangements to servants, but this remark does not, in all cases, apply to the families of the East Indian or half caste portion of the community. Most of the women belonging to this class prefer catering for their own households, and generally their knowledge of the vernacular, as ordinarily spoken, and their thorough intimacy with the native character, and the various customs, habits, and modes of dealing of the people in all their phases, derived from constant habitual intercourse and association with almost every grade of them from their very infancy,—enable them to transact business with them to some advantage; at all events, they are too good judges to allow themselves to be taken in. As a body, the East Indians,

Eurasians, or Anglo-Burmese, or Indo-Britons, constitute a very respectable and wealthy community. Most of those resident in Maulmain keep a conveyance, a one-horse palanquin carriage or an office Jaun, and their wives, when they proceed on their marketing affairs, invariably go in a *gharee*,* either in their own, or in one hired for the occasion. Early in the morning, therefore, the main street is for some distance on either side of, and opposite to, the bazaar entrance, completely choked up with vehicles, and it is long past seven o'clock before the roadway becomes even comparatively clear for general traffic.

Making our way through the collection of gharees of all conditions which thronged the thoroughfare, myself and the butler arrived at the entrance of the Burra bazaar at six o'clock, one unpleasant morning, in the middle of May. We mounted about four slippery wooden steps, which led from the street to a

* Carriage.

long boarded passage, about ten feet wide, on either side of which benches were raised, behind which were small apartments resembling pigeon-holes, ranged right along for a considerable distance, and separated from each other by means of wooden partitions. These were the bazaar shops. The shop-keeper squats himself down, resting on his haunches on the bench, which is about five feet in width or depth, and around him his wares are deposited, in the midst of which he sits and serves his customers and takes his money. There were a number of grocers in this part of the bazaar; dealers in tea, coffee, ghee, sugar, tamarinds, dates, &c. There were also dealers in drugs and condiments. The matron here purchased her dried red chillies, saffron, garlic, coriander, cocoanut, and other ingredients for her curries and sulphur, alum, senna leaves and castor oil, to cure the ailments of her children. In another passage similar to this—with the exception of the raised benches, grain—potatoes, and yams,

were sold, as well as rice, rolong, flour, dried peas or grain, provender for horses, &c. The back apartments, or pigeon-holes, appeared to be used as warehouses or store rooms, for reserve stock. In some instances there were two persons concerned in the business of a shop. One, perhaps, would confine his duties exclusively to serving the customers, whilst the other would take the money, and enter the transactions, as they might occur, in a book.

The dealers in groceries, condiments, drugs, grain, and most descriptions of dry goods are either Madrasees or Telingese. They are usually naked (during business hours), with the exception of the cloth which is worn about the middle, and evidence a considerable amount of loquacity whenever a dispute occurs regarding price and weight. It was curious to observe the length of time that would sometimes be expended, and the volume of words that would be wasted in an argument concerning the overcharge of a pie,*

* A copper coin of the value of about half a farthing.

or the difference of a pennyweight avoirdupois. The customer, however, generally appeared to get the best of it, or else the difference between buyer and seller would (if possible) be split, in order that the transaction might be closed satisfactorily to both parties, after, perhaps, about a quarter of an hour's debate upon the merits of the question. Passing beyond these shops in the direction of the river end of the bazaar, the visitor arrives at the stalls occupied by the butchers or meat-sellers. There are stalls where beef alone is vended ; stalls which are devoted exclusively to the sale of mutton—when there is any to be sold ! and stalls where the lover of swine's-flesh may purchase the wherewith to satisfy his palate.

Beef appears to be the description of meat brought daily in greatest abundance to the market. The beef-butchers invariably are Mahomedans. This rule does not apply alone to Maulmain. In no part of India does any other class of people kill neat cattle. The Hindoos

of every denomination, or grade of caste, have a superstitious veneration for the bull and cow ; and a prejudice against killing them or eating the flesh of these useful animals, appears to exist amongst other tribes and sects of religionists, Mahomedans excepted. They alone do not recognise this prejudice, and, consequently (in this country) beef-butchers are obtained exclusively from the ranks of the followers of the prophet. Beef too, appears to be the cheapest kind of meat obtainable. The best is generally sold in the bazaar, at the rate of about two annas (3d.) per pound. A coarser description of beef, procured from the flesh of the buffalo, is sold at a much cheaper rate.

Mutton is the most expensive article of food procurable in Burmah. Sheep will not thrive in the country. The experiment has been tried over and over again, but without the least success. I fancy this is attributable to a lack of sufficiently nourishing pasturage ; but I am not agriculturist enough to determine this point.

Sheep are imported from Madras and Bengal, but not in nearly sufficient quantities to supply the market regularly. Sometimes a number are brought over to Maulmain as a speculation by a master of a vessel, or two or three, perhaps, by an enterprising officer of a government steamer, who invests a small portion of capital in such a purchase and the freightage. They usually sell at an enormous profit, but are purchased, in most instances, by gentlemen who endeavour to feed them into condition for their own tables, as, on arrival, they invariably present a shockingly attenuated appearance, occasioned probably by sea sickness, change of air and scene, and close confinement on board ship. The mutton, consequently, which is ordinarily obtainable in the bazaar, is goat mutton, and even this is expensive, whilst the meat is decidedly inferior. A leg of goat mutton, weighing, perhaps, four pounds, will cost about three rupees, which is at the rate of eighteen pence a pound, and there will be nearly as much bone as

meat, even in such a bargain. Frequently, however, indeed generally, mutton of any description is not procurable in the market at all. I remember once a grand masonic feed being given in honour of the Provincial Grand Master, on the occasion of his departure from the province. The members of the lodge, in testimony of their esteem and fraternal good will, had voted that a saddle of mutton should grace one end of the board; but it was found impossible to furnish such a dish, otherwise than by the purchase of a whole sheep. The person upon whom the responsibility of providing the feast rested, had a world of difficulty in effecting such a purchase. At length, a native who had been nourishing a sheep upon grain for upwards of a month, and who had got the animal into fair flesh, was induced to part with it, in consideration of the sum of forty rupees (£4) of lawful money in hand to him, well and truly paid. The caterer for the entertainment cleared the expense by a ready sale of the legs and shoulders

to private individuals. The mutton dealers are Hindoos, either Madrassee or Bengalee.

Pork is vended solely by Chinese. Mussulmans and Hindoos concur in considering pigs unclean animals, and their antipathies are strong in condemnation of the flesh of swine. Pigs thrive wonderfully well in Burmah, but are reared principally by Chinese (who are extremely partial to pork), expressly for the market. They are cleanly fed and well kept, and the flesh is delicate and tender. Judging from my experience of English pork, I think I prefer that fed by Chinese, but I never touched any fed by natives, in Hindoostan. Pork is reasonably cheap in Maulmain, but it is in great demand, and cannot be had generally for less than four or five annas (6d. or 7½d.) per pound.

Proceeding onwards, we came to the part of the bazaar fronting the river ; a covered street running due north and south. At the south end is the fish-market, the presiding deities over which, are Burmese women.

I am not an admirer of the Burmese style of beauty myself, but I must admit that, generally speaking, there is something respectable and nice in the appearance of the Burmese females. Most of the women who sit in the bazaar, whether old or young, are attired in clean white jackets and coloured tameings, and many of them wear necklaces of gold and pearl, and large gold ear-rings. They do not by any means realize our cockney notions of such traffickers. A Burmese female vendor of fish and a Billingsgate saleswoman would present a contrast decidedly unfavourable to the latter. *Apropos* of ear-rings, the Burmese women adopt a very curious and, to my thinking, very unbecoming, if not repulsive, fashion in ear ornamentation, or deformation. The ear of the female infant is pierced, and the orifice is then filled up with a reed. In process of time the reed is removed, and something larger is inserted to increase the size of the hole. Then thickly-folded leaves are thrust in to widen it, until at length the place is big enough to

receive a gold ornament about an inch in diameter, and probably an ounce or so in weight. The lobe of the ear becomes unnaturally large and flabby by means of this treatment, and, by the time the female arrives at puberty, the appearance of that appendage is exceedingly ugly. But I am digressing. Well, then,—there are Burmese women selling fish and displaying their jewellery, —those that wear any. Their flesh is clean-looking, their hair well oiled and nicely combed back from the forehead and carefully arranged behind, and they show their white, pearly teeth, and their bright, black eyes sparkle joyously as they smile at one anothers' jests whilst dispensing their piscatory wares to admiring customers. There seems to me something soft and melodious, insinuating and persuasive in the language, when spoken by the women, who, by the way, I imagine, are generally anxious to make the most of themselves, and are certainly not destitute of personal vanity. If a woman is dark complexioned, she uses for her face and neck a

powder which is sold in large quantities in the bazaars in the same way that English and Eurasian ladies use violet-powder. This is applied so plentifully, and with such excellent effect, generally, that the darkest skin is rendered comparatively fair by the process. In the opinion of a great many of the visitors, evidently, these little arts of captivation are not exercised in vain ; at all events, the fish market seems the most attractive part of the bazaar.

There is one drawback, however, to its attractiveness. A compound of odours pervades this department, which, however grateful it may be to the olfactories of its habitues, is decidedly unpleasant to the senses of decent Christians. There are strong smells emanating from large quantities of salt fish, fresh fish, and ngapee, which conglomerate into one villanous stench. It is the smell arising from the last-mentioned ingredient which completes the offensiveness of the atmosphere, which is tainted with the

influences prevailing in this particular quarter of the bazaar.

Ngapee is a description of food which is much eaten by the Burmese, and is regarded by them as a delicious confection. Indeed, it is their staple article of domestic consumption in the victualling way, and, strange to say, they appear to thrive upon it. It consists of nothing less than putrid shrimps, salted, beaten, or mashed up together, and dried. No meal that a Burman makes would be complete without this ingredient. Their rice and curried vegetables are invariably flavoured with it, and it forms a staple article of commerce all over the country. Large quantities are sent up the rivers, and the King of Ava admits it as a delicacy within the gilded portals of his palace. Shrimps cannot be procured in the rivers except within a limited distance from the sea, and ngapee is only prepared in places, situated on the shores of streams which empty their waters into the sea, included in a line of about forty miles from the coast. Maulmain is

a great mart for transactions in this article of commerce, and dealings at certain seasons of the year are very extensive.

The Burmese are averse to killing any animal for food. The doctrine of the transmigration of souls forms an article of their creed. Hence, the destruction of any animal for the purpose of making a meal off a portion of the carcase would be regarded by a Burman, not only as a species of moral cannibalism, but as involving an unnecessary and wanton murder of, perhaps, a blood relation. Entertaining these Pythagorean opinions, then, the Burmese never become customers of the butcher; but they have no objection to regale themselves off the flesh of animals that have departed this existence in the ordinary course of nature. Fish that perish for lack of water, or dogs that die for want of breath, form alike acceptable meals for themselves and families when cooked with curry stuff and seasoned with ngapee. Two Burmese men from Henzadah had been permitted to

occupy one of my godowns for some few days, pending the settlement of some business, which had brought them to Maulmain. A goose (one out of three that I owned) died one afternoon, from what cause I am unable to say. My servant was ordered to bury the carcase of the defunct bird, but these men begged that it might be bestowed upon them. Their request was complied with, and they were in great glee. The dead goose enabled them to make a feast, to which they invited some friends, and infinite was the enjoyment manifested by the party in the disposal of the viands furnished, the goose, of course, forming the basis of the meal.

Very fine prawns are procurable in this market, some of them as large as young lobsters. Crabs, seer, bechtee, mullet, sole, pomflet, plaice, and mango-fish may generally be obtained, but I believe the fish market here is considered rather uncertain in regard to its supplies.

The north end of the street before described is devoted to the vegetable market, which is also

presided over chiefly by women. The supply of fruits and vegetables, of course, varies according to the season. Pumpkins and water-melons grow abundantly in Burmah; so do yams, lettuce, and a variety of indigenous productions for table use, bearing names which I do not know how to spell. The jack-fruit, cocoa-nut, and pine-apple grow spontaneously everywhere, and these fruits may be had for the mere trouble of gathering. A very fine jack or pine-apple may be purchased for a pice, a coin of less value than a halfpenny. Plantains, custard-apples, green cocoa-nuts, dorians, mangoes, guavas, oranges, limes, and other tropical fruits all come in their seasons, and are here plentiful and cheap. In this part of the market the Burman purchases his stock of palm leaf and betel for the day, and, as there is always an unlimited demand for this luxury, there is invariably an inexhaustible supply.

Returning towards the main street and taking a turn to the left on our way out of the bazaar, we come to the poultry market. Here ducks

and fowls are plentiful enough. A very large hen may be purchased for eight annas (1s.), and a fine duck for twelve annas (1s. 6d.) The price of chickens ranges from one to four annas, according to size, and eggs are proportionately cheap.

Two streets in the bazaar, running east and west, parallel with each other, are appropriated to the occupancy of dealers in cloth or piece goods, and vendors of cutlers' ware, stationery, and fancy articles of all sorts. The miscellaneous dealer transacts business from a raised bench. The shops of the cloth merchants boast neither platform nor counter. The pigeon-holes are behind all the shops. The tradesmen of this department belong generally to the Mahomedan persuasion, many of them being natives of the Madras coast, though some of them are Burman Mussulmans. The Indian merchants are called by Madrassees, *Moor-men*.

In Maulmain the cloth merchants are rather a wealthy and consequential body, but the

system on which their trade is maintained, although it may be considered quite legitimate in a mercantile point of view, does not evidence, I should think, a very healthy state of things in a general way. Most of the Mahomedan or Mogul merchants of Maulmain are money-dealers, and money on the security of lands or valuables, realizes an enormous rate of interest, sixty per cent. per annum, and upwards. The European merchants receive their consignments of piece-goods per ship from England, and a ready market is found amongst the Mogul usurers, who obtain long credit on their invoices, the rate of discount for cash payments being comparatively trifling. In Burmah, where speculations in timber and produce are so extensive, money is in constant demand for advances to foresters, coolies, and others, and speculators can afford, generally speaking, to pay heavy interest on loans, which is abundantly covered by the usual returns. In many instances the security to lenders consists of the

timber itself, properly described in a conditional bill of sale, whereby, in failure of due repayment at a stipulated time, the property reverts to the lender, who, of course, employs some agent (at very scanty remuneration) to mark and watch the timber, and in all respects to guard his interests, so as to render loss to him next to impossible. Thus it is that large sums *in hand* to the usurer are always desirable. He accordingly buys piece-goods (we'll say) at long credit and sells to retailers at about twelve or fifteen per cent. under cost price for *cash*, by which he is a gainer, after the close of his transactions with the European merchants, of probably twenty-five or thirty per cent. The bazaar dealers are themselves content with a comparatively small profit upon their wares, so that it frequently happens, when the markets are well stocked with piece-goods, that prints, muslins, calicoes, and such like gear, may be purchased in the Maulmain bazaar at less cost than they can be obtained at in London or Manchester.

The retail drapers and merchants in that part of the world, like their brethren in Regent Street and Piccadilly, employ their arts and eloquence in the process of "shaving the ladies;" but I fancy they are hardly so successful there as the London shopmen in their experiments. They always ask double the value of an article at the outset, and the intending purchaser has to beat them down to something like a reasonable price before his or her business can be concluded. As a rule, if a bazaar dealer specifies a particular sum as the price of anything you want, it is advisable to tender him a fifth of that amount. He will feign indignation, and proceed to put away the article which has been subjected to so disgraceful a deterioration. Then he will relent, and bate a little of the original demand. You refuse, and increase to a trifling extent upon your first offer. He peremptorily rejects the idea of such a sacrifice, and you turn upon your heel and are about to depart. He deprecatingly calls you back, remonstrates persuasively, tells

you he is a very poor man, inquires pathetically how he is to support himself and family if he sells at a ruinous loss to himself? and then names a figure, about the half of that first proposed as the minimum price that he possibly can take, and that even then he will not make a fraction of profit. You are hard-hearted, and care not for that; you will make a final proposition,—you will give—so much. Bismillah! why, he will lose two annas by such a bargain; how can he do that? Well, you don't care about purchasing, you will go, and again you turn your back upon his shop. "Come back, sir, come back," says the merchant, "I will take——;" and then when he is putting up the article you have bought, he gives you to understand that he consents to so ruinous an abatement to secure "Master's favour," in the hope that on some future occasion you will become a more profitable customer.

Wages here are paid monthly. The salaries of the civil and military functionaries, clerks in

government or mercantile offices, servants' wages, all are paid monthly. This plan necessarily affects the domestic arrangements of a good many people, who consequently lay in a stock of provender after receiving their salaries, to last them until pay-day comes round again. Fire-wood, materials for curries, rice, ghee, oil, tea, coffee, sugar, yams, salt fish, grain, &c. are purchased and stored up for daily use. It is a careful provision against the possibility of famine, from month to month, in regard to families in which anything of a tendency towards lavish expenditure in other matters is to be feared from the habits and associations of the lord and master of the household. The forethought and prudence of the Indian matron is always conspicuous in such matters.

Directly you enter the bazaar for the purpose of procuring your day's provisions, you are followed about by boys carrying baskets, who are candidates for employment as coolies, to convey your purchases to your carriage, if it waits

without, or to your residence, if you have journeyed thither on foot. Some care is necessary in the selection of one of these lads for the service required. If the boy happens to be a Mussulman he will not defile his basket with pork, and if he be a Hindoo he will manifest a similar repugnance to carrying beef.

The bazaar is open every day of the week, Sundays included. Indeed, Sunday may be said to be the busiest day of the week, not only as regards the bazaar, for the shops in the town drive a very brisk trade on the Christian's Sabbath.

Besides the Burra Bazaar there are several smaller ones ; indeed, there is one in every district of the town, and, some two years after my arrival, one was established higher up in the main street, as a rival to that which I have described. I regret to say it was not found to be an improvement upon the Burra Bazaar in respect to cleanliness. The whole of the space occupied by the bazaar is boarded, and

the posts, stanchions, partitions, shops, stalls, and other appurtenances are constructed of wood. A roofing of tiles covers the whole building, or range of buildings, with an occasional opening to admit the light. I should think this bazaar covers an area of nearly thirteen hundred cubic feet.

So, my readers will see, the resident of Maulmain can satisfy all his main requirements at the Burra Bazaar, but for most of his luxuries he resorts to the shops. The principal general shopkeepers are Jews, if we except one, the proprietor of a ship-chandlery and general store, who is a Bengali Christian. The greatest man amongst the Hebrew shopkeepers, Mr. Abraham Cohen, does a very extensive business. At his establishment I purchased my beer and wine, my brandy and cigars; my perfumery, my soda water, gloves, hats, boots, registered paletots, preserved meats, biscuits, cheese, my bijouterie, and almost every superfluous article I might fancy, and was able to

purchase. Here, too, ladies select their millinery, their embroidery patterns, and buy toys for their children.

By-the-way, I had nearly forgotten my baker. He was a Chinese, and had his shop and bakery in the main street, but his man used to bring his basket round daily, and my butler would take from him the quantity required, the master sending in his bill for payment monthly. There are several other bakers in the town, all of them Chinese, but bread in this country is chiefly consumed by Europeans and the better class of East Indians; the natives and East Indians, whose means are limited, are content with rice.

My house was an upper-roomed wooden edifice, with a thatched roof, situated in a garden comprising about two acres of land. It consisted of a hall and four rooms, with front and back verandahs on the upper story, and below stairs a dining-parlour with verandah all round. My

cook-room, kitchen, store-rooms, coach-house, and stables were detached from the house, which was furnished quite comfortably, with an eye to neatness and propriety.

CHAPTER VII.

Law and Police Courts. — Magistrates and Judges. — Pleaders. — Affrays and Police Proceedings. — Chinese Passion for Play. — Gambling Houses. — Heavy punishment and fines — Punishment of a criminal. — Law processes. — Delay in administering justice.

ABOUT three hundred yards from the Main Wharf, at the extremity of a street leading from thence eastward, is a broad plain or esplanade about the size of Russell Square. A wide road running north and south bounds the square on the east, and separates it from an enclosed garden, which extends the whole length of the esplanade, surrounding a large and handsome villa, constructed of teak-wood and roofed with

the leaves of the palmyrah tree. About the square are several houses enclosed in gardens or "compounds," and in the centre is a barrack-looking wooden erection, about fifty-five yards long and sixteen in breadth, thatched with leaves and irregularly built, which destroys the otherwise pleasing aspect of the spot. Within this edifice are the chambers of the several courts of first instance for the province, and the police court and post-office. The scene is remarkably peaceful in its character before business hours, and until then few people are to be observed stirring about the locality. Two or three Talien policemen may be seen smoking their large green cheroots, lazily lounging about the police office doors, and perhaps an occasional passenger or two crosses the square in the direction of the bazaars, or towards the Tavoyzoo road. At about ten o'clock however, the quiet which reigned in the neighbourhood gives place to scenes of considerable bustle and excitement. There are four courts held in the straggling and

inelegant building I have just described, viz.—the Police and Joint Magistrate's courts, and the courts of the Assistant Commissioner and Tseetkay.* The verandahs and passages of each all round the building are crowded with litigants and their witnesses, complainants and defendants, policemen and office-peons, and vendors of fruits, confectionery and ginger-beer. There are people of both sexes of various nations dressed in their national costumes, some arguing, some quarrelling—everybody talking.

As far as my means of observation justify me in expressing an opinion on the subject, I may say that it appeared to me that the game of litigation in these provinces very much resembled chicken-hazard, blind-hookey, or pitch-penny, and you were sure to lose if you happened to en-

* Since this chapter was written there has been an alteration in the descriptions of these functionaries. The Assistant Commissioner, Joint Magistrate and Tseetkai, subsequently held rank as First, Second, and Third Assistants to the Commissioners.

counter experienced players, "old hands," the "knowing ones," who were constant frequenters of these establishments, sometimes holding hands themselves, occasionally holding them as proxies for others, or else looking on as attentive spectators and listeners. Perhaps the Judge who might happen to preside at (we will say) the Assistant Commissioner's court, was a youthful lieutenant of a Madras Sepoy regiment, whose legal education even in the details of the anomalous system of jurisprudence which then obtained there, had probably been very much neglected, and whose logic as enunciated from the Bench, was generally speaking, undoubtedly bad. I believe candidates for such an office were not required to submit to any particular test of qualification, except as regarded a knowledge of the vernacular, and even this was not insisted on in all cases, and, as far as I could ascertain, legal capabilities, acquaintanceship with the common principles of British jurisprudence, did not seem to be branches of learning requisite to constitute,

in every instance, the eligibility of even an ensign in his teens to be entrusted with the balance and sword of Justice.

The Tenasserim and Martaban provinces, during my residence there, were under the local government of a Commissioner, who had under him a deputy for each province, and Assistant Commissioners and Tseetkays. All of these officers were Magistrates and Judges. The duties of the Deputy Commissioner, however, were principally those of a revenue officer or collector, but he acted as Magistrate in regard to all criminal cases which might occur in the province over which he had jurisdiction, and it was his duty to hear appeals from the courts of the Tseetkays and the Goung Gyouns, who presided over courts of First Instance, the former in the capital, for the trial of petty civil causes, the others (who were native officers) holding their courts, and primarily adjudicating in cases involving large pecuniary interests in the districts of the interior.

The Assistant Commissioner's functions were

purely judicial. He presided over the highest court of First Instance, and his duties in the capacity of Judge of that court were extremely onerous and important. His original jurisdiction was entirely unlimited as regarded the entertainment of suits involving amounts above two hundred and fifty rupees, and he was frequently called upon to adjudicate in cases comprising questions of the utmost legal and public consequence. One would think that the person selected for such an office ought to be a man of considerable experience and of extensive legal acquirements, of mature age and understanding, and of long tried and spotless integrity. If appointments of such persons to such offices had been generally made, whatever objections might have existed against the system then obtaining, in the abstract, it would certainly have operated somewhat satisfactorily ; but suppose the Judge to have been a young subaltern officer, whose age perhaps did not exceed five and twenty, who had never had (prior to his appointment to the post)

an hour's experience in legal matters, and who was apparently utterly ignorant of even the simplest principles of jurisprudence !

Could one imagine it possible that either natives or Englishmen could have any confidence in the tribunals of the country, if such tyros were placed in judgment over them. Respect may be paid by the million to the name of justice ; but what respect could possibly be entertained for the individual representatives, who, in such cases, might be said so to usurp her prerogatives ? Fancy the security of person and property depending upon the dicta of mushroom judges such as these ! Yet it is a fact that such youths have presided over that court. Of course, it is quite impossible to suppose that precocity of talent in such instances should so have forced itself upon the notice of the legislature as to render the eligibility of such candidates for judicial honours paramount to the pretensions of all other aspirants. We may therefore, I think, safely set such appointments down

to the private influence of individuals high in authority, upon whose patronage such very fortunate young gentlemen perhaps may have had peculiar claims. I am willing to concede that in a few of such cases the nominees may possess talents of a superior order which require but a little time and experience to develope themselves, and render their possessors capable of ornamenting any high office. But the public cannot afford to suffer from the errors committed during their apprenticeship. It is true the Court of the Assistant Commissioner was but a court of original jurisdiction, from the decisions of which, a dissatisfied litigant had the liberty of appealing to the Court of the Commissioner; but as the Judge of the Lower Court was permitted to exercise his discretion in recording proceedings before him, and as his written judgments were supposed to be based upon the facts upon record alone, very important ingredients in respect to the merits of a case might possibly be omitted to be recorded as being "surplusage" in the

opinion of the Court, but which, in the judgment of an experienced jurist, would perhaps be of vital consequence as affecting the issue. The appellate court took cognizance of no new facts which might be submitted before it, in cases already decided in original, but deliberated only upon such as were recorded in the proceedings of the lower court sent up with the case. If proper representations to the appellate court regarding omissions of important facts were made by the Vakeels (or pleaders) employed by appellants, supported by sufficient arguments in favour of an application for re-trial, in some instances cases might be sent back for re-investigation, but the legal importance of such omissions would have had to be concurred in by the Commissioner, and if that functionary happened himself to be a military officer, not over well informed as regarded the theories appertaining to the science of law, and perhaps averse to entering upon puzzling and troublesome calculations and enquiries when they might with the least grace be

avoided; the ends of justice, in such a case, might, perhaps, have been more frequently defeated than served.

A suit, however, was not always terminated by decree of the Commissioner. Litigants had the final chance of appealing from the Commissioner to the Sudder Dewany Adawlut, of Bengal, which tribunal might (after perhaps a lapse of five or six years) pass an ultimatum reversing the decision of the court below, by which time, if the amount involved happened to be large, the litigant who was eventually successful would perhaps have been ruined through the law's delay, and formerly existing means of recovering his rights would be available no longer. Frequently in the non-regulation provinces the proceedings of the courts were very dilatory, and occasionally delays were productive of some cruel results.

It would surprise a stranger to see the number of persons who daily congregate about these courts who profess to be pleaders, or vakeels, and it would somewhat amuse an English lawyer likewise to remark the varieties that present

themselves at the bar as candidates for forensic fame. These gentry charge a per centage or commission on the amounts involved in any suits entrusted to their advocacy, but their claims to fees are not recognised by the courts, unless the stipulated amount or the per centage be expressly specified on the face of the powers of attorney under which they are admitted to act. This arrangement is entirely between pleader and client, and it in no way affects the adverse party in the way of costs.* It seems that any person may appear to plead in the courts as the agent for another under a power of attorney, so that generally speaking our Maulmain lawyers are

* A year or so after the above was written, an equitable provision was made, regulating pleader's fees according to a scale, similar to that recognised in the Mofussal Courts of Bengal, which are now charged to the losing party as costs of court, and are summarily recoverable. Pleaders now have likewise to submit to an examination as to qualifications, which, if satisfactory, entitles them to a licence to practise, provided the court is satisfied as to the character of the candidate.

people who are out of any regular employment, and pick up jobs in the courts to enable them to make out something of a living. There are two Europeans who devote their time and talents in the prosecution of this line of business, about a dozen East Indians, a few Bengalees, a number of Mussulmans, and nearly half a score of Burmese. The Europeans, and two or three of the East Indian pleaders, by all accounts, derive a tolerable income out of their practice, and I dare say some of the native pleaders do pretty fairly; but the majority who represent "the bar" of the local courts, are the hungriest looking set of ragamuffins I ever saw, even in Portugal Street.

The petitions upon which summonses are issued set forth the complaint of the suitor in writing, either in the English or Burmese languages. The rest of the pleadings are either written or delivered orally and taken down by the judge. Some of the written pleadings which are occasionally filed by the pettifogging

practitioners who undertake the conduct of suits on behalf of litigants, are excessively rich specimens of composition, both as regards orthography and syntax. In some instances, complaints, answers, &c., are really terrible documents on account of their verbosity, and frequently it would puzzle the most astute judge that ever adorned a bench to make head or tail of the meaning intended to be conveyed in them. The Burman vakeels file pleadings and argue their causes in the vernacular. Mussulmans and Bengalis argue theirs in Hindostanee, and the East Indians in a dialect which is supposed to be English; but which, in most instances, is the most barbarous mutilation of our mother tongue, that ever was heard tell of.

If the exterior of the court houses is inelegant and mean in appearance, the interior fully bears out the impression conveyed by an external view. The Assistant Commissioner's Court is a long room very much resembling a barn, with

a raised platform at one end, with a rail in front. On this platform is the judge's table and chair. It is one of the darkest, dingiest, and dirtiest courts of justice imaginable, and gives one no sort of idea of the dignity of such tribunals. There is not an atom of paint or whitewash about the place to enliven its character, and scarcely any furniture to invest it with an air of respectability. There is another rail, behind which suitors and witnesses stand, like criminals, and between that rail and the platform there is a table at which the clerk sits, and a bench about six feet long, upon which pleaders may sit if they please. There are two or three other tables occupied by clerks, and one or two old almirahs, which contain papers. The Tscetkay's court presents precisely the same characteristics, except that being situated at the end of the range of courts, it has more windows, and is consequently much lighter and airier.

The police court is, perhaps, the most imposing of the four chambers, as well as the largest. I

was wont to pay occasional visits there out of curiosity, and I was generally speaking much diverted. It struck me as remarkable, that I never once went as a spectator to this court, that there were not some Chinese accused either of gambling, or smuggling, or fighting. They are very rarely guilty of theft. This circumstance induced me to make some enquiries, which have elicited the following particulars.

There are, it seems, two classes, or clans, of Chinese in Maulmain, the Chin Chew, and the Macao men; and between these, there exists a determined spirit of hostility and jealous rivalry. Once a year, the members of the two factions meet, in order to assist at certain ceremonies which take place at the Chinese burial ground, and on such occasions a row is sure to be fomented; and next day the police court is crowded with Chinese exhibiting cracked crowns, bloody wounds, and bruised faces. The headmen of the respective factions take a lively interest in the results of these affrays, and the

police proceedings consequent thereupon, and whichever party happens to be fined, the amount is immediately paid out of a fund which each clan maintains for such contingencies, each member of the community contributing his subscription according to his means, towards its consolidation.

As for gambling, it is a propensity which in the case of the Chinese will never, I believe, be eradicated. In whatever part of the world you may travel, wherever there is a community of Chinese, there is a community of systematic and inveterate gamblers. An active magistracy may do whatever they please in the endeavour to put it down, but they will never succeed. The heaviest penalties, the severest punishments have been variously tried, but they have failed. They may scotch the snake, but they will never kill it. It is a part of the Chinese constitution. The spirit is born with them ; it is an ingredient of their very existence. As warm blood is to the tiger, the excitement of gambling is to the Chinese. The most stringent

legal enactments against the practice have been found unavailing to secure its abolition. To gratify his passion for play, the Chinese will resort to every artifice, and he will invent the most ingenious dodges to evade the law, or to escape detection, that the mind of man can possibly conceive.

When Captain Haughton first assumed office, as chief magistrate, he determined upon adopting strong measures for the suppression of this practice, rightly conceiving its continuance to be a very serious evil. In a place like Maulmain, perhaps, worse consequences result from causes of this nature than in many other towns. The Burmese are an excitable race, and are easily led into such propensities, and as they are not remarkable generally for their strict adherence to any fixed moral principle, they are not very likely to be over-scrupulous concerning the way of arriving at the means to gratify a passion for play, after having once acquired it. Now the sawyers employed in the yards of the timber

merchants in Maulmain, are Burmese, and when these men absent themselves from their labour, much inconvenience, and, occasionally, heavy pecuniary loss, result to their employers. The low gambling houses about Myangoon, Tavoy-zoo, and MOUNGNAN, offer various enticements for these men, and they often resort thither after receiving an advance of wages ; in which case it is very seldom that they will return to their work until every portion of their money is dissipated. The head sawyer of a timber-yard is generally responsible for the due attendance of the men employed under him, by virtue of a contract, stipulating to supply a certain number of sawyers daily, until the completion of a specific amount of work ; and usually a penalty is attached for the non-fulfilment of such contract ; but it is very seldom indeed that such penalties can be enforced, and the master, who is probably under an engagement to load a vessel with a certain quantity of converted timber by a particular date, accordingly suffers

from the laches of his men. Not only do such inconveniences to trade as these accrue from the existence of gambling houses ; but dacoities and thefts, and other crimes, of various degrees of magnitude, may frequently be traced to such causes.

When Captain H. first entered upon his magisterial functions, the evil was on the increase in the town and suburbs, and this, it was supposed, was owing to the leniency with which his predecessors in office had treated offenders of this class who had been charged before them. Fully cognizant of the importance of putting down the practice, he doubled the amount of fine which it had previously been customary to inflict. This, it was imagined, in some respects, did a little good, as it served proportionately to increase the vigilance of the police officers, who pocketed half the amount of fines recovered, as perquisites for aid and information, and consequently more gamblers were convicted ; but beyond the fact that this course demonstrated more

fully the extent to which the offence was carried on, nothing material resulted from its adoption. It was wholly inefficient to suppress, or even to check the operations of the Chinese, who, by reason of the assistance derivable from the clan funds to which I have already alluded, did not care for pecuniary fines, and as every Chinaman is more or less a gambler, payments out of those funds for such contingencies were of course considered by the headmen, who acted as directors and treasurers, as quite legitimate disbursements.

The houses wherein gambling was (and is) usually carried on, are evidently constructed to secure privacy, and to facilitate escape in the event of a surprise. In the main street there is a long row of houses on either side of the thoroughfare, all occupied by Chinese. I believe every one of these houses possesses, in some way or other, the requisites for this description of pastime. Generally the front (ground-floor) is a shop. A door opens from the shop into an

apartment behind, from which there is a communication to the upper part of the building. So far there is nothing to denote that there is anything illicit going on within the premises. Business in the front shop is transacted in the usual manner, to all appearance; but a Chinaman is hanging about the street doorway, and he gives a peculiar sign to a passenger—a sign which only the initiated understand. The passenger enters the shop, and holds a few moments' conversation with the dealer, who is busy at his counter. He then passes into the inner room, and knocks at a door which is cautiously opened. He passes into a narrow passage, at one end of which is another door, leading into a further apartment, on the floor of which some ten or twelve Chinese, with perhaps a few Burmese, many of them with opium pipes in their hands, are seated at a mat marked off with red and black checks, on which various coins are placed, and in the centre of which is a small four-square oblong metal box, which one of the

party is spinning round, after the manner of a tetotum. There is a square piece of metal which fits into this box, the top of which is marked off into four divisions, two of black and two of red. Presently the box ceases to spin, and falls over—perhaps on the red side—red clears the board. The game, which is called *Nadoung*, seems, in fact, to be in principle precisely the same as *rouge et noir*. At this juncture the man who had previously made the sign at the outer door, which has elicited the response of the passenger, as before observed, rushes in and gives an alarm. In an instant coins, mats, dice, counters, nadoung box, every indication of the recent occupation of the party vanishes, no one sees whither—and all the players and their confederates rush to a back door, which leads to an alley in the rear, when a terrible noise in the centre apartment announces the arrival of the police. The pursuers reach the passage leading to the gambling room; but here a trap has been laid, and the foremost of them have been

precipitated into a filthy hole underneath the house. The rest clear the aperture, and arrive at the back door just in time to catch the last two or three of the retreating delinquents.

The police party and the few prisoners whom they have succeeded in capturing, then come to a rallying point. Those who have not been foremost in the endeavours to effect an entrance, and catch the culprits in *flagrante delicto*, have nearly broken some of their limbs in their recent unexpected descent, and are covered with soil, which is by no means sweet-smelling. A search of the premises from top to bottom is, however, conducted with vigour, and eventually some portion of the insignia of the gamblers is discovered, some counters, dice, or something of that sort, and the ostensible proprietor of the hell is taken into custody, charged with the persons who have already been captured,—the former with keeping a gambling-house—the latter with gambling therein.

Finding that the infliction of fines would not

answer the purpose intended, the magistrate resolved to combine imprisonment and hard labour in irons, with the pecuniary penalty, on every occasion of conviction of such misdemeanours before him. Keepers of gambling-houses are now mulcted in fines of five hundred rupees, in addition to which they are subjected to three months with hard labour. When this plan was commenced, it certainly had the effect of putting the Chinese on the *qui vive*. For some time after the first two or three examples the police made no captures, and it was confidently thought that a salutary and effectual check had at last been hit upon. But it was not long before it was discovered that there were obscure haunts in various localities in the town, which were resorted to for the purpose of gambling operations, the existence of which for such manœuvres was previously not even remotely suspected by the authorities. These places were cleared, and again the magistrate congratulated himself on the seeming suc-

cess of his efforts. Soon, however, the practice was found carried on successfully in even less likely places, and when the Chinese were hunted out of these, they took to boats on the river, until the town again afforded comparatively safe retreats. If anything will operate as an antidote to the evil as respects Chinese, it will be the dread of imprisonment; not that imprisonment has any horrors for them, *per se*, but the rules of a gaol do not by any means agree with their system. Most of the celestials are accustomed to the use of opium, taken either internally as a pill, or by means of smoke through a small pipe. Deprivation of this indulgence produces a frightful reaction upon the system, and occasions, I believe, intense mental as well as bodily suffering.

Perhaps the most troublesome class of offenders are the Telingese, natives of the Coringa and Coromandel coasts. Numbers of these people crowd the police court daily. It is only the lower orders of Hindoos who will emigrate;

persons who probably have lost caste in their own country, or whose habits are such as to preclude them from obtaining employment there. Some decent low caste people occasionally come with their families and seek honest livelihood by working at some mechanical business, but by far the greater number are characterless servants, fraudulent traders, coolies, and prostitutes.

In my opinion much of the vice that prevails amongst this description of people is occasioned through the female portion of them. A district of the town called Nyabusthee (in Bengali—new village) is filled with prostitutes, and the most disgraceful scenes are constantly occurring in that locality. Towards afternoon the women are cleaned and prepared to exhibit themselves at the doors and windows of their houses. They are for the most part gaily dressed and plentifully bejewelled, and pursue their calling without the remotest attempt at concealment, parading it, indeed, in the most public and shameless manner.

The dress of these women is picturesque and becoming, the profuseness of the ornaments worn by them alone indicating the nature of their profession. Their apparel consists of a close-fitting jacket of silk or linen, covering the breasts. A scarf or shawl, of light material, is worn across the right shoulder, meeting at the waist on the left side, where the ends are loosely tied. From the waist ample drapery is worn, which falls in graceful folds, entirely covering the figure above the knee. Their forms are generally symmetrical, and their features regular and lovely; their large, lustrous black eyes, fringed with long silken lashes, and their half-open mouths displaying even rows of pearly teeth, investing them with a soft and voluptuous expression. The hair is luxuriant, and when released from the bounds within which it is usually kept confined, sometimes covers the entire person. When dressed, the hair is arranged in a cluster at the back of the head, and this is surmounted with a showy, circular,

gilt head-dress. Sometimes three or four gold necklaces, of various patterns, decorate the throats and breasts of these females, massive gold bangles, or bracelets, encompass their wrists, and silver or gold bangles likewise embellish their ancles. Through the nose a ring is worn; sometimes two, or even three, and similar ornaments grace their ears.

There is an immense number of these women in Maulmain, and some of them, I was credibly informed, have amassed wealth. Not a few of them carry on business as pawnbrokers in a small way, lending money at enormous rates of interest on the security of jewels and valuables of all descriptions.

Of course the regular companions and associates of these women are some of the vilest of the various foreign races that inhabit the settlement. They seem, however, to be chiefly patronized by Lascars of vessels, and the syrangs, tindals, and lumpers of the port. Dissipated Indo-Portuguese, depraved Chinamen,

and drunken European soldiers and sailors are also to be seen at all hours of the day and night hovering about their doors. The neighbourhood presents a continual scene of riot, drunkenness, and debauchery ; and those houses that are not actually brothels, are, for the most part, dens for the reception of stolen property, and asylums for vagrants and thieves.

If a Burman or a native of India is convicted of any petty larceny summarily before the magistrate, the usual plan is to give him three dozen lashes with a rattan, and let him go about his business, although sometimes imprisonment is awarded in addition to corporal chastisement, according to the degree of the offence. Rather an amusing case came under my observation once. An individual of rather diminutive stature, black as Erebus, whom I had frequently remarked hanging about the purioos of the several courts, dressed in a travestied imitation of European costume, was taken to the police court on a charge of theft. His occupations had been

various. He was once a touter for a tavern, occasionally a petition writer, sometimes a messenger, but his profession might be said to be that which is called by the Americans "loafing." He was extremely consequential in his demeanour. His attire consisted of a black *billicock* hat, around which was folded an extensive muslin turban of the coarsest material. A white shirt-collar contrasted with his dusky complexion; around his neck he wore a loosely-tied coloured cravat; a grey alpaca coat and waistcoat, and dirty white trousers, all of them much the worse for wear, and of exceedingly ostentatious cut, completed his attire. He gave the name of Emanuel Francis.

When the larceny with which he stood charged was brought fully home to him, the magistrate deemed it advisable to make some enquiry concerning the antecedents of Mr. Emanuel Francis, when the fact was elicited that he was a native of Madras, of the Pariah caste, that he had some few years previously been imprisoned for theft,

The difference in the temperaments of Burmese and Indians is never better contrasted than when they are brought to suffer punishment at the triangle. The latter will utter the most piercing cries of distress and agony, not only during the infliction of the lashes ; they will continue their lamentations long after the castigation is completed. The Burman will never utter a sound. Stroke after stroke falls on his flesh, raising it into livid weals at every application, but no cry escapes him, and scarcely any motion indicative of suffering is to be detected.

All cases involving crimes of any magnitude which cannot be summarily disposed of, are sent by the magistrate for trial before the commissioner at the criminal sessions of the provinces ; but there is no periodical gaol delivery as is the case in the presidencies, which are under the jurisdiction of Her Majesty's Courts, and the calendar of cases for trial is not always filled up in regular order. Neither are the sessions held at stated intervals, but appear to be called gene-




rally according to the convenience, or at the discretion entirely of the commissioner. Sometimes serious evils result from irregularities in this respect. I will mention an instance—

An East Indian merchant of Maulmain died, leaving a will bequeathing all his available property to his wife and seven children in eight equal shares, stipulating that all the sums belonging to the estate, when realised, should be laid out at interest in good and sound securities for the benefit of the legatees, and especially for the support and education of the children until they should attain the age of twenty years respectively, the executors being the wife and two brothers of deceased, and a fourth party, a Mr. L., for the services of which three latter, in carrying out the testator's intentions, the sum of fifty rupees each per mensem was to be apportioned.

The three male executors were traders in timber, each on his own account, although it seemed the brothers occasionally identified their

individual interests with those of each other. The timber business in Burmah is a sort of traffic which usually involves a considerable amount of risk, and occasionally the outlay of large sums of ready money prior to the anticipated realization of any profits. L. borrowed a certain sum of money from the estate without consulting the other executors, and applied it to his own purposes without furnishing any security whatsoever. The brothers borrowed certain other sums after consulting the widow on the subject, but also without giving security for repayment to the estate, which sums they used for their own business purposes. There was, besides, another material difference in the mode of borrowing adopted by L., and that pursued by the brothers. The former, as executor, received the amount of his loan from a mercantile firm, on account of the estate, and appropriated it to his use without troubling himself to expose the transaction to his co-executors until after the money had been used in such a manner as to




leave it quite uncertain whether the estate would ever get any portion of it back again. The brothers conducted their business operations upon the premises formerly belonging to the testator, and then in the possession of the surviving members of his family, their business chiefly consisting in the conversion of rough teak timber into boards, planks, rafters, scantling, &c., and all their property lay upon those premises, upon which there was always considerably more than would suffice to cover the amounts of their respective loans.

Well! Mr. L., as executor, had received a large sum of money on account, out of which he had only paid a very insignificant portion to the treasury of the estate, so when the matter became known to the brothers, they deemed it consistent with their duty to make pressing enquiries relative to the disposal of the balance. The result was unsatisfactory, and some disagreement ensued relative to the way in which the estate was being managed. However, L.

prudently took time by the forelock, and without waiting for the brothers to take the initiative in respect to him, denounced them to the Magistrate as criminals, under Act XIII. of 1850, entitled "An Act to punish breaches of trust in India." The brothers were accordingly arrested and charged at the Police Court, with having, in breach of trust confided in them, applied to their own use certain sums of money, and with embezzlement.

It appeared on the primary investigation at the Police Court, that the accounts had been kept in a very slovenly manner, and some of the transactions that were enquired into, were doubtless unbusinesslike, and had been improperly conducted. However, the magistrate was of opinion that a case had been made out against the brothers for fraudulent misappropriation of trust property, and committed them for trial at the sessions. The defendants were admitted to bail, but the whole of their property was attached and placed under the seal of the Police



Court, an ameen being appointed to take charge of it.

The latter proceeding of course occasioned an entire cessation of their business. The property (as I have explained) consisted of rough teak-timber ready for conversion, and a quantity of planks and other converted timber. The timber market in Maulmain is constantly fluctuating. At the time of this occurrence the price of wood was high, and building materials were being sold to great advantage. It was suggested that sales of the property might be effected, and that the police might take charge of the proceeds, pending the final adjudication of the matter, but this was disallowed; so guilty or innocent, the brothers had nothing for it but to look at ruin calmly in the face.

Fourteen months elapsed from the time of their committal, before the charges were tried at the Sessions Court. The brothers were fully and honourably acquitted; but they came out of the ordeal ruined men, with crushed spirits and

blighted hopes ; the imputation of felony which had for so long a time been impending over them having prevented their employment in any confidential capacity, whilst their business was, of course, completely destroyed.

I could cite other instances of the evils attendant upon such delays in the administration of justice equally deplorable, but that will give you some idea how oppressively the present system operates occasionally.

By the way, I ought to mention that in the Sessions Court, a sort of imitation trial by jury is adopted in criminal cases. Five persons are appointed to sit on the trial of a case, and after the evidence has been summed up by the Commissioner on the conclusion of the investigation, they are asked for a verdict. If their views coincide with those of the judge, it is all right, and their verdict prevails. If on the contrary, there is a difference of opinion between judge and jury, the verdict of the latter is ignored. An illustration of this occurred not a very long time ago.

CHAPTER VIII.

Voyage to Rangoon in the "Nemesis."—Amherst, on the Salween river.—The Irrawaddy.—Immense alligator.—Animals and insects.—Mosquito creek.—Miseries on arriving at Rangoon.—State of affairs there.—Journey to the house of Mr. L.—Generous hospitality.—Wretched dwellings.—Burmese boat races.—Accommodations for the spectators.—Animated description of the race.—A Burmese drama.—Dancing girls.—Curious scene.—Wrestling matches.—Extraordinary climate.—Excursions about the town.—The Great Pagoda described.—A fearful prospect.—Return to Maulmain.

At length the rains ceased. The south-west monsoon, in its struggles with the north-east, made some very convulsive expiring efforts, but the storms of the conflicting seasons were then over, leaving us in the enjoyment of sunshine

and calm. Towards the close of their influence, I visited Rangoon, having seized the opportunity presented by a fortnight's holiday, during the Lhay Peine Pooay, to proceed to the capital of our newly-acquired possessions. I was accompanied in this excursion by my friend, Dr. P., who, having but recently joined his regiment in Burmah, had likewise an inclination to travel in that direction. As the reader probably will like to have an account of our proceedings during the expedition, I address myself to the office of recording, for his edification, such particulars as may possibly prove interesting.

The H. C.'s steamer, *Nemesis*, was the vessel engaged to convey the mails from Maulmain to Rangoon, Akyab, and Calcutta, and our passages to the former place were accordingly secured in her. Some little difficulty arose at first as to our accommodations, the *Nemesis* not being generally employed on the mail service, and not being fitted up in any way as a passenger boat. Several officers were proceeding in her "on

service," and those gentlemen, of course, had the preference of such cabins as were available. Had the weather been at all certain, we could have contented ourselves at night with a "shake down" on our mattresses on the quarter-deck, over which a thick awning was kept constantly stretched; but it would have been excessively unpleasant to have been disturbed out of one's slumbers during the night by reason of the rain penetrating through the canvas overhead. Fortunately, my companion was known to one of the officers of the ship, and we soon made ourselves acquainted with the others. An arrangement was speedily concluded for our nocturnal comfort. One of us was to sleep on the gun-room table, and the other in the third mate's berth, the third mate volunteering (by permission) to "turn in" to the second mate's bunk during that officer's watch upon deck. Of course, a friendly dispute arose between myself and the doctor as to which of us should sleep upon the table, because the third mate's

berth was decidedly the preferable resting place of the two, and each insisted that the other should occupy that. The difference was, however, at length, satisfactorily adjusted by the pair of us tossing up for the choice. The doctor won, and chose the table, thereby stretching a point in politeness as I thought, rather superlatively fine.

Imagine us now, then, dear reader, on our voyage. We start with the first of the ebb tide in the morning, which has opened very pleasantly, affording us hopes of favourable weather. Steam is up—round go the paddles—ease her!—full power!—starboard!—we are off. So swiftly do we proceed down the river that we are soon past the most crowded part of the town moorings. We glide past the long rows of sawyers' sheds that skirt the river bank along the Myangoon shore, leave behind us the docks and building yards of Tavoyzoo, MOUNGAN, and Mopoon, and soon turn the corner at Keouktan, when the town and the tall masts of

the shipping at anchor are excluded from our view. The only objects appertaining to Maulmain which are now left for us to gaze upon are the pagodas, which crowd the summits of the several hills, and the Commissioner's mansion on the green declivity of one of them, half shaded by the luxuriant foliage surrounding it. Presently, these, too, disappear.

On the west shore down the river, two or three miles to the southward of Mopoon point, stand a dilapidated wooden edifice (which has evidently once been a pretty and apparently substantial residence) some sheds thereto appertaining, and the remains of a brick furnace and chimney, which are situated on the south bank of a small creek. Around this place, the country appears to have been cleared, but it does not seem to be at present under cultivation. The view here is picturesque, but the buildings and the adjacent lands appear deserted and present a melancholy aspect, This place is called Natmau, or the Devil's Point, from *ngat*,

a spirit, and *man*, point.* There was once, it seems, a steam mill and a building yard here, which, with a considerable tract of neighbouring land, belonged to a Calcutta firm, which became bankrupt some years ago, and the property is now tenantless.

From this point, on either side of the river for some miles, there is nothing to be seen shoreward but the dense jungle, save here and there two or three small huts near the water's edge, in which fishermen take shelter, and where they moor their boats and mend their nets. In the stream, however, we meet or overtake sea and river craft of various descriptions—majestic European merchant vessels, unsightly “country wallahs” (as the native Indian vessels are called), Burmese katoos, Malay prahus, and Chinese junks, and smaller river trading boats. We

* The term *Ngat* may be variously applied. It may signify a good or an evil spirit. In some portions of the Damathat, the ngats are represented as angels, in others as fays, fairies, or spirits of the forest.

pass Fishing Village, and are not very long ere we arrive off Amherst, and here the pilot takes his leave of us.

Amherst, in lat. 16 deg. 4 min. north, and long. 97 deg. 34 min. east, is situated at the entrance of the Salween river, which has its source in the Himalayas, from whence its course is nearly due south until it empties its waters here into the sea. The village or town is built upon a peninsula, which is distant from Maulmain, by river transit, twenty-seven miles. By land, however, I suppose it would not be much more than seventeen or eighteen miles from the capital of the province, if a road were only constructed from the one place to the other. The convenience which such a highway would be as regards the general interest of the port has long been apparent, but the government, it is supposed, grudges the outlay, although, I believe, the local authorities have urgently recommended the measure. At present the only mode of land communication consists in a sort of foot

pathway or jungle track, which runs through dismal swamps and over rugged hills, and is only traversable by natives, who, themselves indeed, make very little use of it, except on occasions of peculiar emergency. A bold range of wooded hills rises within a short distance, on the inland side of the town, leaving but a small space of level ground, but partially cleared of jungle, between them and the sea on the one side, and the river on the other.

After the treaty of Yandaboo, in 1826, it was in contemplation, by the then commissioner Sir Archibald Campbell, to make this the capital of the Tenasserim Provinces, but this project was subsequently abandoned in favour of the superior advantages of Maulmain. It is now a pilot station, for which its position renders it extremely convenient, and is resorted to by residents of Maulmain as a sanatorium occasionally, and as an agreeable watering place, the refreshing sea-breezes operating beneficially upon the health of invalids, and the varied

scenery, and the ordinary quiet of the sea-side forming a pleasant change by way of recreation after the cares of business, and the routine of a town life.

There are a number of very pretty marine residences here belonging to the pilots (of whom there are about half a dozen Europeans), and merchants, and other gentlemen of Maulmain. There is also a jail here, whither the sick and superannuated convicts are sent ; and there is a bazaar in which the visitor may purchase fish, but poultry, vegetables, and meat are scarce and dear, and often not procurable at all. Some capital oysters are to be had, as well as crabs and cray-fish ; but if a man intends to enjoy a holiday here, he should by all means contrive to make his commissariat arrangements complete before he ventures so far. The excursionist must lay in a stock of preserved meats, liquors, and cheroots, if he makes up his mind to sojourn more than twenty-four hours in Amherst, or starvation and misery stares him in the face.

The navigation of the river Salween is very intricate, and accidents to ships proceeding up or down, by grounding, are of no uncommon occurrence. The pilots, however, are generally very careful, as any one of them is liable to lose his license, or to be suspended from employment in that capacity, if a vessel in his charge should touch the ground in consequence of his ignorance, negligence, or want of skill.

We spent an exceedingly pleasant day on the ocean. Captain G., of the *Nemesis*, was a capital fellow, and excessively proud of the little vessel under his command. Wonderful were the stories he related of her past prowess in the China war, and also during the more recent engagements in Burmah. I forget the particulars of half the feats that were performed with her, but one anecdote I recollect related to her having chased a number of the enemy over some paddy fields on the banks of the Canton river. Captain G., however, was not in her on that occasion, so, of course, could only speak

from report. Her draught of water was, however, he said, very light, and if the fields were flooded at the time, the accomplishment of such an operation as that alleged to have been performed by the little steamer, might not have been an impossibility.

We came to anchor at night, outside the light vessel, at the mouth of the Rangoon river, and after a jovial evening, enlivened by songs and the sprightly conversation of half a dozen excellent fellows, we retired to rest; I to the third mate's berth, as arranged, the doctor to his mattress on the gun-room table, upon which he soon fell soundly asleep.

I arose at daybreak on the following morning, and found the weather the reverse of pleasant. The atmosphere was thick and muggy, the sky hazy, and there was an uncomfortable drizzling rain; in fact, Aurora on this occasion came out damp and dirty, and therefore did not appear by any means prepossessing. Steam was soon got up; myself and fellow passengers had dis-

cussed our matinal coffee and cheroots, and completed our respective toilets, ere we got fairly into the Irrawaddy river, when we repaired to the quarter deck, under the awning, which was tolerably impervious to the effects of a mist, although not sufficiently waterproof to shelter those beneath it from a soaking under a heavy rain.

This was not the sort of morning upon which to appreciate the beauties of river scenery, however magnificent they might appear upon ordinary occasions. Had the shores of the Irrawaddy been remarkable for all the natural splendours imaginable, I must have failed to observe them on this, the first occasion of my voyaging upon its waters. From my own experience at present I should pronounce it, decidedly, to be one of the most uninteresting streams a tourist would wish to journey upon. As a river, the Irrawaddy is, however, universally allowed to be majestic, superb, and those who are competent to give an opinion respecting its various charac-

teristics, state that for many miles up in the interior, it is navigable for ships of heavy burthen ; that the passage upwards is singularly free from the impediments usually incidental to river navigation, and that during the rainy season large vessels can safely sail up to the very gates of Ava. Beyond Donnabew, they tell me the natural features of the country present many and varied attractions ; below that station the scenery is tediously monotonous, nothing but dense jungle to be seen on either shore, no mountains to enliven the flatness of the prospect, no cleared tracts of land laid out for cultivation ; here and there may be seen a Buddhist pagoda, with its gilded spire rising above the trees, and there is the town of Rangoon on one side, and the village of Dalla opposite.

As the *Nemesis* was proceeding onwards toward our destination, our attention was directed to an alligator of enormous length, which was swimming along against the tide (here very strong),

at a rate which was perfectly astonishing. I never beheld such a monster. It passed within a very short distance from us, its head and nearly half its body out of the water. I should think it could not have been less than five-and-forty feet long, measuring from the head to the extremity of the tail, and I am confident it was travelling at the rate of, at least, thirty miles an hour. This river and its numerous creeks swarm with these animals, and bathing in them would therefore, one would suppose, be a very dangerous pastime; nevertheless, the Burmese will, and do, constantly venture in the streams, and it is really surprising how few of them are carried down by alligators. Fatal accidents have frequently occurred to Europeans and Eurasians from bathing in the Salween and Irrawaddy rivers and creeks, and only a short time previous to my visit, a ship's apprentice lost his life while swimming near one of the Rangoon wharves; but Burmese seldom fall victims to their temerity. How this is to be accounted for, it is,

of course, impossible to conjecture, unless it may be attributed to a caprice of Providence, similar to that manifested in the case of the ground sharks which abound off the Coromandel coast, which are never known to carry away any of the native fishermen and Catamaran men who may be said to half live in the surf, whilst it is almost certain destruction for an European or Anglo-Indian to venture into the water off the beach.

As may be supposed, at present, the climate for some distance up the Irrawaddy, in latitude about 16 deg. north of the equator, is anything but conducive to human health. There are some obscure stations to which European officials are sent in fiscal and judicial appointments; but it has been found necessary to keep those functionaries constantly changing their quarters for fear of the fatal influences surrounding them. None of the Burmese towns at present are drained, and but a very insignificant

portion of the country is cleared for agricultural purposes. The influences of heat and damp upon the rank vegetation may possibly be conceived. Jungle fever of the most malignant description attacks every European who is at all exposed to those influences, and proves fatal to all who have not, in a great measure, become acclimated by long residence in the country, and frequent visits to the forests.

Of the numerous noxious animals of various descriptions which it may be believed abound in the uncleared tracts of the low country, the reader may perhaps form some tolerably vivid conception unaided by any efforts of my pen. Wild beasts and reptiles innumerable infest the plains, and poisonous insects swarm everywhere. Those terrible foes of mankind, the mosquitoes, are as much to be dreaded by Europeans, perhaps, as tigers and serpents, and along the shores of the Irrawaddy they arrive at an alarming size, come out at sunset in myriads of myriads, formidable hosts of winged demons, seeking whom they

may devour. Those only who have passed a night on the Irrawaddy, having neglected to provide themselves with proper curtains to protect themselves against the attacks of these insects, can imagine the torments to which it is possible to be subjected under such circumstances. I should inevitably fail in any attempt to adequately describe the horrors of such a situation. Up the Irrawaddy, some considerable distance from Rangoon, a small deep river branches off. This stream is known by the name of Mosquito creek, so designated by some sailors during the last Burmese war. It is a name of dread significance. There the river steamers used to anchor at night; perhaps, indeed, they do so still. Dreadful tales are told concerning the horrors of this anchorage. Men who had borne bravely the scorching mid-day heats, the many privations attendant upon exposure to all weathers at sea and on land; the dangers of battle, sickness, harassing fatigues, miseries of every degree of magnitude,

gave way before the horrors of Mosquito creek. During the late hostilities, some ships remained at this anchorage for two or three days waiting for orders. Several men of their crews went raving mad, and one, in despair, jumped overboard, and was drowned.

At length we came to our moorings; the part of the stream selected for the situation of the Government steamers being nearest to the Dalla side. The paddles had hardly ceased working, when a number of boats came up alongside, and the *Nemesis* was boarded by the Master Attendant, the Postmaster, and several merchants of Rangoon.

The doctor and I, besides several other passengers and our servants, were permitted to proceed on shore in the Post Office boat, which rowed directly for the dockyard jetty, and in something less than half an hour from the time of the vessel's anchoring, we were duly landed. The view of the town from the river was anything but imposing. It seemed to consist of a

number of miserable huts erected indiscriminately about the place, without any attempt at order or arrangement. The Shoay da Goung Pagoda, usually the most remarkable object of attraction in the scenery, was hidden in the mist, and altogether a more sombre and uninviting prospect than Rangoon presented on this occasion, can hardly be conceived. The temperature was excessively warm, the thermometer at ninety-six degrees in the shade, it was raining obstinately, and not a breath of wind stirred to relieve the dense atmosphere. We ascended the steps and stood upon the jetty in about as uncomfortable a condition as can be conceived. We were in a state of damp heat as if we had been steamed; felt dirty, and I have no doubt looked rather disreputable. On landing, we looked at each other in incertitude as to whither we should direct our footsteps. Presently, however, a gentleman, a perfect stranger to both of us, came up, accosted us in the most polite manner, and obligingly invited us into his resi-

dence (a house situated close by), where we were kindly permitted to wash our hands and faces, an operation which considerably improved us, after which we partook of some refreshments, of which we stood in some need, being very thirsty as well as hot.

It had been originally proposed by us to stay with a friend whose residence we supposed to be in the stockade (as the cantonment is called), and of course it was desirable that we should proceed to his quarters immediately. We thanked our host for his exceedingly kind attentions, and requested to be directed to our intended destination. We were, however, informed that our friend had left the day previously for Henzadah, whither he had proceeded on duty. This was particularly awkward, especially as there were no hotels in Rangoon, and we had depended entirely upon meeting our friend there for quarters during our brief stay. What was to be done? We were decidedly in a peculiarly perplexing predicament.

The doctor and I gazed upon each other's countenance for a moment in blank dismay. Our course, under the circumstances, was, however, plain enough, and I immediately took the initiative. There we were, in Rangoon, without any present means, at all events, of getting away from it, as no vessel would leave for Maulmain for twelve or fourteen days at the earliest. We must contrive to hang out somehow. I frankly explained to the assembled company how matters stood with us, and inquired, first of all, whether, in the town of Rangoon or its vicinity, we could procure a lodging? Some notion of the capacities of the place was forthwith communicated to us, and we became fully alive, in a very brief space of time, to the exceeding helplessness of our situation.

There was (we were informed) on a certain swampy piece of ground a hut constructed of matting, roofed with leaves, which was distinguished with the sign of the Railway Hotel (possibly in anticipation that at some future

time a railway may exist in Burmah), a place conducted by a couple of individuals licenced to retail wines, beer, and spirits on the premises, at fabulously high prices. There we might possibly be accommodated with the privilege of a night's shelter (finding our own beds) on payment for the same of about five rupees, or ten shillings sterling. There was a billiard-table set up in the establishment (we were told) to which resorted at night time persons of every shade of complexion and character, who sometimes kept up the game all night, drinking, shouting, singing, and fighting.

We shrank with horror at the bare idea of being necessitated to patronize this delectable house of entertainment for man and beast, and made further inquiries relative to the resources of the town applicable to our present requirements. We were told that accommodation in Rangoon otherwise than as guests of some individual having a portion of house-room to spare, was out of the question, and it was believed that

very few residents at that time were in a position to offer hospitality to strangers, as the boat-races would commence in a day or two, and almost every European householder had visitors from the interior to share his dwelling. Our present host had a house full of guests; nevertheless, should we fail in obtaining quarters elsewhere, we were heartily welcome to the shelter of his roof and seats at his table, in regard to the latter of which he begged that we would at all times consider ourselves privileged.


One of our fellow-passengers upon this intimation, said that he was engaged to a friend in cantonments to stay for a few days with him, and he thought that he might venture to take, at all events, one of us with him. He thought that Dr. P., being an officer in the service, might, in the event of his friend being unable to accommodate him, meet with somebody who would be glad of his company. Indeed, if both of us were to accompany him to the stockade, he had no doubt but that we would contrive to hang out comfortably somewhere.

Hereupon another of the company volunteered to introduce me to a friend of *his*, who, he dared say, would find means to stow me in some corner or other, and proposed that I should at once start with him to be presented in due form, so that an arrangement might be forthwith concluded. It was no part of the plan originally projected between myself and the doctor that we should be separated during our stay. After some conversation on the subject, however, it was decided that as we might contrive to meet constantly and take our diurnal excursions together, we should accept the propositions that had just been made to us respectively. It was therefore concluded that the doctor should proceed with his military friend to the stockade, and that I should place myself under the guidance of the gentleman who had undertaken to interest himself in my behalf.

It may seem odd, perhaps, to the untravelled reader, that so perfectly free and easy an understanding should at once have been established

amongst people most of whom I believe on this occasion were utter strangers to each other, or known only through casual circumstances, occurring on a short steamboat passage, and a subsequent short introduction, such as I have described. Such demonstrations, however, in the present instance, may be easily accounted for, considering the necessarily unsettled state of a community in the first stage of its development out of that social chaos which inevitably follows war, amidst the scenes of recent havoc and desolation. Every vestige of the old city of Rangoon (except some portion of its brick pavements, some of its wells, a select few of its pagodas and shrines, and a small number of Kyoungs or Burmese monasteries), had been utterly destroyed. Ancient Kyoungs within the stockade had been preserved and appropriated for public offices and the residences of the most consequential of the military authorities, and some dilapidated buildings, (one the late palace of the Burmese governor), had been converted

into commissariat godowns, or warehouses, and barracks for the clerks. Many government employees immediately after the proclamation of peace and annexation, had no habitations assigned them on shore, and at first were compelled to live on board the vessels lying in the river, pending the erection of temporary huts for their residence, near the stockade. Those persons unconnected with government, who were desirous of settling in the country, had to provide themselves with the means of shelter as they best could, whilst the soldiers were encamped under their tents. Persons of all sorts and conditions being thus thrown indiscriminately together by the fortune of war, all more or less dependent upon each other for assistance in a variety of ways, were compelled to exchange obligations of many sorts. Common necessity is, in most cases, a powerful leveller of social distinctions. Rangoon in its early days after possession was taken by the British, might have been termed a model republic of liberty, equality



and fraternity. Immediately after the annexation of Pegu to our dominions, hundreds of persons emigrated to the new settlements from all quarters of India, and from other countries. The governmental establishments were enlarged, and there arrived consequently a number of additional clerks, craftsmen, and labourers. Many of the emigrants were aborigines of India, but a very large proportion of Europeans and Eurasians likewise made their way there, and these latter, whatever might have been their relative social positions in a more settled community, were, under then existing circumstances, compelled in a measure to associate in closer and less reserved companionship one with the other. Plots of land were apportioned by government to applicants for the same for temporary occupation, as sites for tents or huts ; but this favour was accorded only upon the understanding that after the ground intended to be laid out for the new city, had been surveyed, and the plans for its erection duly decided on, they were to raze

their habitations after receipt of due notice from the authorities and vacate the ground. Hence, all over the plain on which Rangoon now stands, arose quantities of huts of most unsubstantial construction. The majority of them were composed chiefly of bamboo posts, and matting roofed with dried palmyrah leaves. The walls of some were plastered with mud, the flooring being the level ground plastered with cowdung. One capitalist obtained a large piece of ground to the south-eastward of the government dock-yard, and there built a treble range of wooden barracks, which he had partitioned off into separate compartments, small mat cooking sheds being erected in the rear, one for each compartment, and these rooms he rented out at enormous rates. Within the limits of the cantonment, barracks and substantial residences were commenced upon shortly after the cessation of hostilities, so that many of the officers, and the whole of the troops, were soon quartered in comparative comfort. Nearer the river side, in what might at present

be termed the business quarter of the town, there was not a single private residence of any pretension. Amongst men so herded together, (for scarcely anybody had yet ventured to bring wife and family to this comfortless place), the easy and familiar intercourse one with the other which seemed to subsist could hardly be wondered at. Each man appeared to feel himself at home beneath his neighbour's roof, and generally the freest hospitality was extended to strangers. Very much in this social condition was Rangoon in the month of October, Anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four.

Myself and my new acquaintance wended our way towards the domicile of his friend (one Mr. L.), to whom I was to be introduced. This gentleman resided in a temporary cottage, erected on an uncleared piece of ground, overgrown with rank vegetation, in company with two other habitations of a similar description, a little way to the rear of the custom house, and situated about half a mile (to me it seemed a couple of

miles at least) from the dockyard jetty where we landed. I shall not forget the walk we had to get at it. There did not appear to be any regular roads about Rangoon except a narrow one which led towards an elevation upon which stood the ruins of a pagoda, terminating in a partially cleared way conducting to two other roads, the highway to Kemendine, and the road to the stockade and Shoay da Goung pagoda. There were sundry tracks laid out and partially levelled, leading to different districts of the town and cantonments, but no proper roads had hitherto been constructed. There were some narrow alleys bricked along, which once formed some of the streets of the old Burmese city, but these were cut up pretty considerably during the war, and were now by no means pleasant paths for promenading. There was nothing like even a pathway on our route until just before we arrived at Mr. L.'s residence, when we turned up one of the paved alleys aforesaid. From the dockyard to this alley our way lay over a tract

of uneven ground, about which were scattered all sorts of offal and rubbish. In some places the soil had been dug up, and we were obliged to jump over deep gutters, and avoid apparently bottomless pits. By way of enhancing the delights of this part of our journey too, the rain was pouring down pretty heavily, and thus we had to make our way amongst squashy mud heaps, treacherous bogs, filthy pools, over broken bricks, logs of wood, &c., occasionally leaping on to some isolated piece of comparatively firm ground at the risk of slipping, on our feet touching its wet surface, or finding ourselves deceived in regard to its consistency. On alighting safely on a piece of terra firma, and thereby relieving the infirmer terror we before experienced lest we should mistake our aim and pop into the mire, we would stand and take a leisurely observation with a view to discover some practicable method of performing another instalment of our journey in something like the proper direction. We had to make a good many

tacks ; at length, however, by dint of undaunted perseverance, after many trials and much endurance, we arrived wet and half covered with mud, safe to the port whither we were bound, now to me, at all events, at least a temporary haven of refuge.

Mr. L.'s house was perhaps one of the most commodious and comfortable of the temporary edifices erected in the Rangoon district. It consisted of two large rooms, and three sleeping apartments, and there were tolerably good out-offices in the rear. The flooring was of boards, and the posts of the house were of substantial teak timber. The roof was thatched with palmyrah leaves. There was no upper story, and the floor was raised but a few inches from the ground. The room into which we walked out of the open air, was evidently the principal one in the house. It was furnished with all the usual articles of domestic utility, but it was in some disorder, and the apartment appeared to be devoted to serve a variety of purposes. It was evidently

the general dining and sitting room, and it seemed to be a store-room also; for piled up near the entrance were several beer and brandy cases; on the side-board were a number of lamps of different descriptions, two or three time-pieces and a box, which I afterwards found contained wax dolls. The walls which were of bamboo matting, were hung with a quantity of pictures; from the centre beam, which formed one of the supports of the roof, were suspended a couple of odd argand lamps. In one corner lay a confused heap of old newspapers, upon which a child of about two years of age was rolling delightedly. To the right of us, as we entered, was a handsome office table covered with papers, writing materials, books, a hat or two, all mixed together heterogeneously; underneath this piece of furniture lay several packages of stationery.

The proprietor of these various items of personal effects was not at home when we first made our appearance within his abode, but my

friend saluted a gentleman who was walking up and down the apartment in conversation with an individual of rather coarse and unprepossessing exterior, and introduced him to me as Mr. G. After this ceremony had been accomplished, the dilemma in which I was situated was immediately made known to the gentleman, and all doubts and anxieties regarding my holiday quarters were happily speedily terminated.

G. appeared to be a bustling, active little man, with a marvellous flow of language and a pretty wit. Rather a good-looking fellow too was he, with light hair, regular features, blue eyes, and a slight moustache; age about seven and twenty. His attire consisted of a wide-awake felt hat, which he was wearing when we entered, coarse cotton shooting jacket, waistcoat and inexpressibles of the same material, all rather worse for wear, and Monsoon boots.

Myself and G. were not long in understanding one another. "I know you can't put up here," he said, "for L. is awkwardly situated just

did just as if the house were his own as well as everything in it.

Whilst we were discussing our brandy and water, Mr. L. came in. I was presented, and all the circumstances relating to my visit on that occasion were duly detailed, together with the arrangement that had been happily effected between myself and G. Mr. L. courteously expressed his regret that he could not be my host, but trusted he should see me frequently as a guest during my stay at Rangoon, and invited me to cards, coffee, and cheroots that evening.

As the time drew near unto the dinner hour, Mr. G. proposed that we should depart towards his domicile. The gentleman who had introduced me took his departure after receiving my grateful acknowledgements of his kindness, and promised to send my servant with my luggage to Mr. G.'s. I now made up my mind for another pedestrian excursion, but G. soon made me easy on that score. He said, a friend of his, who had gone to Calcutta, had left his pony

in his charge, and he could take the liberty of borrowing him for my use so long as I should remain. He despatched his horsekeeper for the animal forthwith, and, in about half an hour, arrived a rough-looking Pegu galloway in excellent condition. We mounted, shook hands with L., promising to avail ourselves of his invitation for the evening, and then made our way across the same dreary waste I have already described. Nearly opposite the dock-yard, but inclining towards the south-eastwards, was situated Godfree's Range. I have already casually mentioned these barracks, and will now endeavour to give you a tolerable idea of them.

G. occupied two compartments of a range, or, as his landlord was pleased to say, two houses. Each separate range of these buildings consisted of about a dozen compartments, and presented the appearance, externally, of one long barn. The flooring was raised about five feet and a half from the ground, and the spaces between the floor and the soil beneath were appropriated

as stables. There were so many holes in the timbers of the partitions which divided one compartment, or "house," from the other, that each tenant could see perfectly well all that might be taking place in his neighbour's domicile. The buildings were constructed upon the simplest principles, and in the rudest and roughest manner possible. There were no locks to the doors or window shutters, but wooden bars and bolts, the cleats for the latter being nailed to the posts, not screwed. The flooring boards did not appear to be fastened down to the underneath beams—they gave with the motion as you walked over them, and abounded with dangerous holes. There were very few apertures in any of the compartments of these barracks for the admission of light and air, except those occasioned by flaws in the planking, and, when it became necessary to shut out the rain or the hot wind, the inmate was obliged to close the window shutters, and thus leave himself in utter darkness. To get into the

house in front, you had to climb a ladder of wood. If you wanted to descend to the out-houses in the rear, you had to carefully get down a ladder of bamboo, the steps of which were fastened to the principal sticks with bits of hempen string. One day, as Mr. G.'s servant was descending with a dish containing the remnants of some beefsteak and onions that had been served up for tiffin, one of the steps gave way, whereby he was precipitated to the ground beneath, and nearly broke his neck.

The prospect from the back door was especially charming. There were the cooking sheds and other rearward conveniences (or inconveniences, as they might, perhaps, more properly be called) belonging to this particular row of barracks, and the back slums of the parallel range. The servants would seem to have been in the habit of throwing the offal from the cooking sheds on to the passages dividing the premises appertaining to the two ranges. Such a compound of villanous smells greeted the olfac-

stories on opening the doors and windows on that side of the house, that it was deemed preferable to keep them constantly closed, except when it was necessary the door should be opened for the admission of the servant when he served up the meals. It seemed to me that the crows abandoned the rear part of those premises as unwholesome, and they are not generally over-particular birds. The fact of the stabling, too, being underneath the house did not contribute much to the sanitary advantages of the dwelling, whilst it undoubtedly favoured the generation of mosquitoes, which insects swarmed here more thickly than it was ever my fate to see them swarm before.

My worthy host had tolerably well furnished this delectable abode; it would otherwise have been wholly unfit for the habitation of civilized man. He had had some portion of the floors matted too, and some rather good pictures which hung on the walls served partially to relieve the forbidding gloom of the interior.

"This is my mansion, sir," said he, with rather an odd expression of countenance as he introduced me within its precincts. "It isn't what you have been accustomed to in Maulmain, I know, but it doesn't leak, and in that respect I may consider myself fortunate. If you like, I'll take you out after dinner, and show you a little how people do contrive to exist in this 'positively shocking country,' and you will agree with me that in comparison with most private residences about Rangoon, this is a palace—and so my landlord evidently thinks, for I pay sixty rupees a month for it."

"Are there many places worse than this?" I asked.

"Worse!" echoed he. "Lodgings upon the cold ground, sir.—Cold ground in the midst of quagmires, and little better than an umbrella for shelter—hardly a wall to hide the sleepers, and an effluvia to which the gases arising from the back of this are as the perfumes of Araby! If you don't believe me, come and see; and after seeing, testify."

I declined, and the entrance of the servant with the dinner, put a period to the conversation.

* * * *

The Lhay Peyine Pooay (or Burmese boat races) is one of the grandest and most exciting of any of their festivals. It commences on the full moon in October, and it celebrates the termination of the south-west monsoon, the season of rain and tempests, and heralds in the return of favourable weather, when they may navigate their boats along the rivers without the risk of encountering the dangers incidental to the visitations of bores, and floods, and tempests, and when they may safely adventure to send their katoos down to the sea, and "do business in great waters."

At Maulmain and Rangoon the European portion of the community evince a good deal of interest in these boat races, and the authorities afford them special countenance by ordaining a general holiday during the eight or ten days

which are devoted to the sports and festivities incidental to the occasion. The courts and all the other public offices are closed; and all who can afford the leisure, abandon their ordinary avocations to enjoy "the pleasure of the time." Thousands daily crowd the strand to witness the sports, and the scene presented along the shore and on the river is exceedingly gay and animated.

This year the Burmese boat races at Rangoon were "got up" on a scale of unusual magnificence. It was the first Lhay Peyine Pooay celebrated here since the annexation of the province, and Europeans as well as Burmese entered enthusiastically into the spirit of this national festival.

A large covered wharf at the Dockyard overlooking the river, had been prepared and fitted up for the reception of about three hundred persons, for whom refreshments had been provided. A piece of cannon was stationed in the yard, to be fired occasionally by way of signal, when a race was begun and concluded. There were to be three days at least of pleasure

and excitement, and all sorts of amusements had been devised for the occasion.

Two gentlemen, both of whom had for some years been connected with the timber trade in the Tenasserim Provinces, and who were then conducting similar operations in Pegu, had taken a great deal of interest in forwarding the arrangements for these races. They had been of the first to venture into the deadly teak forests of the Attaran and Thoungyeen, and conduct dealings with the native foresters, and had become so habituated to intercourse with the aborigines, that when in the forests themselves (I am informed), it was their practice to adopt, to some extent, the habits and costumes of the people, and each of them had been tattooed from the middle to the knees, after the fashion of the Burmese. Both were admirable Burmese scholars, were thoroughly conversant with all the idiosyncracies of the native character, and understood perfectly how to ingratiate themselves with the Burmese people of every caste.

These gentlemen then were the individuals who had chiefly bestirred themselves, not only in the management of the races, but in organizing the various plans for the entertainment of the million incidental to the occasion. They had been chiefly instrumental in arranging matters in connection with the accommodations in the dockyard, but, in order to carry out the objects in view, in this particular, it was necessary that they should be pecuniarily assisted by those who proposed to benefit by the arrangements. Accordingly, to entitle an individual to admission to the wharf and to partake of the refreshments provided, the sum of ten rupees had to be contributed. The proposition, (which was duly carried out), was, that the matter should be accomplished by subscription. Everything had been previously settled at a select meeting, and an honorary secretary, (to act as treasurer as well), had been appointed to see that the funds were properly applied for the purposes in view, and to furnish an account of receipts and dis-

bursements to a Committee which had also been nominated at the meeting. The list was nearly completed before my arrival, but Mr. G. having some influence with the managers, succeeded in getting my name in, for which service I felt infinitely obliged to him.

The Lhay Peyine commenced on the Tuesday succeeding the day of our arrival, (which was on a Sunday). We could hear a variety of notes of preparation sounding long before daybreak. Two of the barracks in Godfree's range, in the building parallel with us, the back of which could be viewed from our back windows, had been hired by one of the two directors of the Pooay entertainments, to whom I have before made allusion, for the express accommodation of some of his Burmese proteges, and these people had been keeping it up all night, with astounding perseverance. The night had been intensely sultry, but the aspect of the morning promised at least something like a dry day. I arose, not from my slumbers, for I don't believe

I slept a wink all night,—but from my couch—
heavy and unrefreshed ; indulged in a bath, and
was dressed a little after daybreak. G. shortly
followed suit by donning his apparel, and there
we were at six A.M. dressed for the day.

We were visited a little after dawn by several
gentlemen, friends of G.'s, one of whom intro-
duced us to a Burman named (I think) Moun-
g Loke. This worthy was apparently about forty
or five and forty years of age, tall and very
powerfully built. His countenance was most for-
bidding, but there was the genuine Burmese cast
of features, something between the Chinese and
the Malay : his eyebrows were overhanging, and
his small black eyes twinkled with an exceedingly
disagreeable expression. His forehead was high
and intellectual, his hair, which was partially streaked
with grey, was drawn up into a knot behind,
and his teeth seemed to have been completely
decayed from the constant use of betel and pauk.
His body was bare down to the loins, across
which his putsoe was tied, which garment chiefly
covered the lower part of his person.

I had brought a gun with me, and the morning after my arrival had been amusing myself by knocking down two or three vagabond crows, taking my aim at them from the side window, G.'s being the end house of the range. Mounge Loke had seen me shoot, and, it seems, coveted the gun ; for which implement he had come to make tenders for purchase. He evidently had a weakness for firearms, and he judged of the merits of a gun or a pistol by the loudness of the report elicited from it. He brought a couple of pistols with him on the present occasion, and amused himself by firing them off, after charging them simply with powder and wadding. A pair of pistols belonging to G. he experimented with in like manner, and I don't know how many times he exercised each barrel of my gun. Whenever a louder report than usual accompanied a discharge, he appeared mightily pleased, and laughed heartily in the exuberance of his satisfaction. His visit was productive of no other result than a criminal waste of gun-

powder ; for it so happened I did not desire to dispose of my gun ; but he seemed to go away, I thought, very much satisfied with his early morning's entertainment, which perhaps would not have been the case had the powder which he so freely squandered been his own.

• On enquiry (after he had taken his departure) I learned that Mounge Loke was a person of considerable consequence in the district in which he usually resided, being a Myo Youk, a sort of native governor or chief magistrate, over perhaps a tract of country large enough to be considered a province. He had been a great chieftain during the Burmese administration, and it was supposed had been instrumental in giving the British a great deal of trouble, even after the proclamation of peace, by heading dacoities and committing other acts of lawlessness, and it was rumoured that he carried his depredations even into the Burmese territory. Whether the deeds attributed to him were actually committed under his direction or not,

seems, however, a matter of doubt. At all events, his influence amongst his countrymen, in the district in which he dwelt, was extensive enough to be considered formidable, and as ours was a policy of pacification, and (as far as possible with regard to native chiefs) propitiation; it was deemed advisable by the government to secure Mounge Loke's fidelity by taking him into confidence; so they appointed him a Myo Youk of his native district, where the terror of his name was sufficient to keep the people in check, or call them to insurrection.

The races were to commence at eleven o'clock or thereabouts. It became a terrifically scorching morning, as the sun progressed towards the meridian. We sallied forth to reconnoitre immediately after breakfast. The heat had hardened the ground, which before had been soddened by the continual rain, and consequently pedestrian exercise would have been possible; we, however, preferred performing our journies on our ponies, as the ground was very uneven, and

walking over it in such weather would have been disagreeable and fatiguing.

From the Dockyard to the Custom-house (a long wooden building with a thatched roof) and the Customs' Wharf, the distance along the river bank was about half a mile, the intervening space being perfectly open, and destitute of any buildings for nearly a quarter of a mile inshore, except one which had been knocked up under the auspices of the conductors of the forthcoming festivities. This was a circular shed, or amphitheatre, constructed of some rough timber, damaged planking, and bamboo, and covered in partially with common matting over the roof, and in some places around the lower part of the building. The interior of this shed was disposed for the accommodation of at least five hundred persons. In the centre was a ring around which was a low partition, to divide exhibitors from the audience, or spectators, and beyond this were arranged rows of seats, one above another, terminating near the principal

entrance to the building by a platform, which extended beyond the circle, upon which were placed several tables and large cases, the latter containing refreshments for the company expected to assemble in the evening. This place was erected for the performance of Burmese dances and plays, and for wrestling matches. One famous wrestler from Maulmain was to exhibit his prowess in that arena, if any could be found to enter the lists with him. Some European patrons had backed him against all Burmah, against all nations, in fact. Those who were subscribers to the funds for promoting the holiday sports were entitled to seats in this house of entertainment, and each subscriber was privileged to introduce a friend to witness the amusements.

We proceeded to the dockyard, to the covered wharf which had been prepared for the reception of visitors, and succeeded in securing a tolerably good place from which to view the proceedings on the river, although unfortunately

not under cover ; we were compelled, therefore, to borrow umbrellas, for to stand out there, with that flaming sun directing his rays full upon us, would have been *coup de soleil*, without benefit of clergy.

On the present occasion I believe the sports had been arranged with greater attention to general details than is even usually manifested at these pooays. There were some contests of apparent importance to take place, and a large amount of excitement appeared to prevail regarding the results of the several races, owing, I believe, to the circumstance, that some tolerably large bets had been made relative to the successes of a number of boats decorated with certain distinguishing flags, hoisted from their sterns. The race boats are long narrow canoes, from thirty to forty feet in length, and in breadth perhaps about three feet and a half. These vessels have plank bulwarks, raised fore and aft, and along the sides, as otherwise it is probable that they would be completely sub-

merged by the number and weight of their crews. They are lightly constructed, are painted and decorated very gaily, and I believe are manufactured expressly for the occasion. Previous to their employment, they are "open to view," in the ground belonging to the Poonghee Kyoungs of the districts which severally own them. After having been duly blessed by the priests, they are conveyed with much ceremony to the river side, followed by a large number of such people as may be interested in their success when the eventful contest takes place. As is the case in all other popular demonstrations amongst the Burmese, a spirit of jealous rivalry animates the competitors for the honours of the day, they being generally partizans of the villages, or districts, which respectively furnish the racing boats.

Opposite to the dockyard, in the middle of the stream, the umpire's boat was stationed, on the masthead of which was hoisted the British ensign. A bamboo was placed athwart her

bows, at each end of which were tied some palm leaves, which were intended to be symbolical of success; the victorious boatmen securing them as they passed. This was the winning-post. The starting point was off Godwin's wharf, about a mile up the river, the course being from thence to about a mile south of the dockyard, and back again to the umpire's boat or goal. At high water, two canoes, fairly matched in regard to size and complement of men, were started, then another pair and so on, until all the boats entered for the day's races had run the course. At the starting of a race boat, bang went the cannon on the wharf, and the same piece of ordnance thundered forth the announcement when a race was run.

It was very curious to see the eagerness of the boatmen as they propelled their boats onwards during the engagement. The canoes were so full of men, that very little of them could be seen above the surface of the water. They used paddles about a yard long, instead of

oars, and accompanied their exertions with yells, shouts, and screams, creating a most outrageous noise. They were very nearly *in puris naturalibus*, their hair was knotted over their heads, and they manifested the greatest excitement during the time occupied in the race. Some of the winning party, perhaps, immediately on attaining the victory, would start on their feet and, with grotesque gesticulations, would commence taunting the conductors of the unsuccessful boat in the most provoking manner. These in their turn would probably retaliate, and very possibly the matter might have terminated in a fight, had not the proximity of the river police-boat and its crew of constables, operated as a check upon any bellicose demonstrations.

These boat races are certainly extremely exciting; quite as much, if not more so, than horse racing. They are contests between men and men, who let you know unmistakeably that they are in earnest in their struggles for the mastery. As they paddle away with a furious

desperation, raising their voices, and quickening their ejaculations, as the struggle for victory becomes harder and closer as they near the goal, screaming with eagerness when the result seems doubtful, and betraying alternately all the emotions of anxiety, rage, and triumph, according as the various accidents of fortune which occur during the contests appear from time to time favourable or adverse, the spectator cannot help being carried away by the excitement of the scene, and instinctively shouts his applause at the conclusion of the race, whichever boat may have had his sympathies during the trial.

The band of one of the regiments was there, and played overtures, &c., between the races. The dockyard was literally thronged with people. Looking from the jetty along the shore as far as we could see on either side, the sight was extremely interesting. Natives of every part of India were there, and Burmese men and women all attired in their costliest and gayest apparel, all apparently highly interested in the sports

they had assembled to witness, and repeatedly manifesting their sense of pleasure, by those impulsive demonstrations which so truly distinguish the oriental character. No sooner would a winning-boat carry away the laurel from the umpire's bow, than an universal burst of enthusiasm would be heard above the roaring of the cannon. The plain between the Dockyard and the Custom-house was completely covered with people, nearly all of whom had umbrellas. The effect was novel, and extremely picturesque.

As we were pushing our way towards the refreshment department, for the purpose of procuring the wherewithal to cool our parched tongues, we encountered my friend, the Doctor, whose corporeal substance appeared to be very rapidly melting down. Our meeting, at first, was one of reproach and recrimination, arising out of the circumstance of our not having met since the preceding Sunday; one whole day, consequently, having intervened. However, that little difference was very soon afterwards amicably

adjusted at the refreshment table. The Doctor had got on a shell jacket, and what had probably been in the morning a white pair of trowsers, and white vest ; but with perspiration and dust, these articles of apparel, together with his shirt and cravat, had become limp and discoloured ; his face presented an oleaginous appearance, and was flushed into a perfect scarlet ; his hair was decidedly in disorder and out of curl, and he looked altogether like one of the disbanded Spanish Legion. He informed me that he had reason to congratulate himself upon his good fortune in regard to his present quarters, and the company he had so opportunely fallen in with, and in the course of the day he introduced me to the new friend with whom he was staying, and who appeared to me to be a very good fellow.

At about three P.M., the principal races appeared to be over for the day, and people began to take their departure from the grand stand. We moved with the throng, and retired

homewards to refresh ourselves. Evening came, and a party of us, as per arrangement, proceeded to the circus. On arrival, we found that no wrestling was to take place that evening, but that trials of skill in that noble art would come off on the following afternoon at two. The entertainments that evening consisted of a Burmese drama, and some dancing.

I have already, I believe, given the reader some idea of what a Burmese drama is. There is scarcely any variation in the plot in any case, but I believe, in most instances, the dialogue is extempore. There were on this occasion the *dramatis personæ* there always are, viz. a prince and a princess in gorgeous array, and a humble lover, a slave, and a buffoon, in more homely habiliments. The company that appeared here were celebrated actors in Burmese estimation, and their efforts were invariably rewarded with unbounded applause. The same description of instrumental music as is usually introduced on such occasions accompanied the present exhi-

bition, and all the details were essentially the same as in dramatic representations of this nature in Maulmain. A couple of large torches stuck in the ground illumined the ring and cast their lurid glare upon the actors. The rest of the building was in darkness except the platform at the entrance where the refreshments were kept, which was well lighted, but this was outside the department appropriated for the audience. The effect was singular. That crowded assembly arranged around that dark and dingy amphitheatre; those nondescript exhibitors in the arena, who with their painted faces and bodies greatly resembled stage demons, and the smoky torchlight casting their forms out in relief as they kept performing all sorts of strange antics, suggested a grotesque idea of Pandemonium.

I cannot say a very great deal in favour of the company generally who honoured the performances with their presence. It is fair to suppose that all the European spectators assem-

bled there had dined ; but some of the ebullitions which took place during the evening could hardly be excused on the score of post prandial excitement, whilst they afforded rather unfavourable specimens of Rangoon manners, in quarters from whence something, at all events, like gentlemanly conduct was to have been expected. After the first part of the drama, or comedy, was over, a number of Burmese dancing girls were introduced, and went through their performances in the arena. Those who have witnessed the dancing of oriental females know something of the style in which the various incidental manœuvres are executed. In the presence of ladies generally there would be nothing indelicate in the figures performed, but in all cases where decency is preserved, the dances are wholly unmeaning, as the accompanying strains, intended to be musical, are monotonous and inharmonious. Considering the style of building and the nature of the proposed entertainment, the reader will of course understand that none of

the fair portion of Rangoon society (just then extremely limited) were present on this evening, but a good number of Burmese women had obtained admission. To do the managers of the affair justice, the intention did not seem to have been to shock the sensibilities of the more decorous of the male portion of the assembly; for at first the ladies of the corps de ballet proceeded with their national dances and songs in the decent, humdrum sort of manner usually adopted when exhibiting before select audiences. But this slow way of getting through the evening did not suit the tempers of the majority of the *élite* of that congregation. It certainly was excessively dull, tame, stupid, and uninteresting; but I am by no means prepared to say that the character of the exhibition was improved by the lapse of the performers into the style insisted on eventually by the greater number of the gentlemen present. Some of them commenced by throwing rupees into the ring, and this was the signal at once for the dancers to discard all

semblance of decency. The object of the expert was to pick up the pieces of coin with their mouths by bending their bodies backwards, so that their heads might come to the ground without lifting their feet from it, and in order to accomplish this feat with applause, they twisted themselves into the most disgusting contortions, and exhibited the most obscene gestures, the burden of their songs being likewise changed to accord with the indelicacy of their actions. These displays afforded the especial patrons thereof favourable opportunities for indulging in sundry pleasantries of not the most modest character, in a style of language which may be better imagined than described.

The following day's races presented pretty nearly the same features as were observable on the first day, although the interest of the populace in the sports was perhaps not quite so lively. The wrestling-matches were the great attraction of the second day. We arrived at the circus at about half-past two, at which time the wrestling

had not commenced, but the place was nevertheless crowded. A stalwart negro (a seaman belonging to one of the Company's steamers lying in the river, reputed to be of immense strength and an accomplished pugilist), had accepted the challenge of the Maulmain champion Ko-Phoo, and his example was followed by a couple of European artillerymen and a Lancashire foot soldier. Opposite to each other, on front benches, near the ring, were seated the umpires (the two European gentlemen to whom I have before made allusion), each having by his side a pile of silks and muslins of richest quality, for distribution by way of prizes to the winners of the different contests. It was considered hardly fair that Ko-Phoo should be required to throw the negro and the Europeans all on one day, although one gentleman declared his readiness to back him to do it if insisted upon, and Ko-Phoo himself announced his perfect confidence in his ability to accomplish the feat. However, it was eventually determined that one

of the artillerymen and the nigger should be settled on one day and the other artilleryman and the Lancashire man on the next, an arrangement which appeared satisfactory to all parties, principals and backers.

Ko Phoo and the negro entered the arena first, and commenced operations. The preliminary manœuvres between the opponents were exceedingly amusing. It appeared to me that Sambo did not exactly comprehend the kind of warfare in which he was to engage, for he commenced sparring out after the most approved fashion, as if he were expected to take part in a pugilistic encounter. The Burman kept about him at a little distance, dodging round with a peculiar kind of hop, with his body slightly bent towards his antagonist, and thrusting out his hand and drawing it back again with a motion as if he wanted to touch the other's flesh, but durst not for fear of getting burnt. Sometimes he would, with amazing quickness, thrust his face pretty closely within the other's reach,

when the negro would make a hit straight out, but would be sure to miss his object, amidst screams of laughter from the spectators. Amusing as this sort of fun was, we were beginning to think it monotonous, when the Burman made a quick and sudden motion, seized Sambo near the hip with one hand, and with a manœuvre executed with such suddenness and dexterity as to be unobservable to any but the most attentive spectator, threw him over his head and brought him flat on his back upon the sawdust. This was evidently a different sort of thing from what Sambo had bargained for. He arose, before the plaudits announcing Ko-Phoo's victory had ceased, and resolutely sparred out again. He made a blow at the champion, which that individual luckily contrived to avoid, or he would probably have been hurt, and followed up the attack vigorously. Ko-Phoo, however, watched his opportunity, and repeated the achievement, this time flinging Sambo with such force upon the ground, that he was glad to retire from the


arena, leaving Ko Phoo to his prizes of silk and muslin.

The artilleryman came next. He was a tall, stout, muscular Irishman, and, apparently, a scientific wrestler; but he, too, turned out no match for Ko Phoo. He was, however, to do him justice, a far more formidable opponent to the Burman than was the negro, and Ko Phoo seemed to appreciate the fact. He was unequal to the Burman in skill, notwithstanding, and he also had to endure the mortification of defeat.

Several other wrestling matches ensued, all more or less exhibiting considerable skill on the part of the Burmese competitors. Sportsmen who are patrons of the art, would discover much to amuse and instruct them at these Burmese exhibitions. For myself, I was not a little surprised, as well as delighted, at witnessing the evidences of science and skill displayed on the occasion.

During my stay at Rangoon I went a good deal about the neighbourhood in company with Dr. P., and visited all the objects of interest

which exist about the locality. As we rode about the town the truth of G.'s statement relative to the discomforts endured by some in reference to domiciliary accommodation, soon became apparent. The sun is so powerful in these regions that the ground hardens very quickly after its saturation consequent upon heavy and long-continued rains, and to some extent here many of those localities that, on the Sunday of my arrival, might almost have been described as apparently hopeless swamps, were, two days afterwards, comparatively dry places. Nevertheless, here and there were dark pools of green and stagnant water, redolent of unwholesome odours, productive of miasma ; and in dangerous proximity to some of these filthy reservoirs were the habitations of Christian men. I saw at the door of one hut, as I passed on my way returning, two or three Europeans, young men, well dressed, evidently, from their appearance, occupying a respectable position in life. The hovel they inhabited was a low concern, perhaps about five and twenty feet square,



built entirely of bamboo, and raised, I should suppose, not more than two feet from the ground. By saying the hut was "built entirely of bamboo," I mean the flooring as well as the framework and walls. Small, narrow bamboos are laid across the thicker ones, which are made to answer the purpose of posts, beams, and rafters, so that, in reality, the floor is nothing better than a grating through which arise the foul exhalations from the ground underneath, which is, of course, the receptacle for all sorts of filth which is not suffered to accumulate above.

There was a bazaar at the end of Godfree's ranges; a market where beef, poultry, fish, vegetables, rice, condiments for curries, ngapee, and other edibles were vended. This bazaar was built by the proprietor of the ranges, and let out daily, for a price, to those who sold goods therein. It seemed to me, as I passed to be an exceedingly dirty place, and not at all sweet-smelling, the odour of the ngapee being decidedly obnoxious to the olfactories of an Englishman. There

was a larger bazaar besides, situated more centrally and nearer to the stockade; but at that time both those markets were merely temporary contrivances, set up to supply the immediate requirements of the community.

The reader has heard of the great Pagoda, at Rangoon? It is properly called the Shoay da Goung Pagoda, but the term has been corrupted into "Dagon," the idea having been probably suggested by some missionary in reference to the idolatrous worship of the Burmese, connecting the same with the similarity of the native name of the temple and that of the abomination of the Philistines. I made one of the party formed for the purpose of visiting this Pagoda one day, and was much edified by the pilgrimage.

The Shoay da Goung Pagoda is erected on the summit of an artificial hill, which commands a magnificent view of the extensive plains of the Irrawaddy on either bank of the river. To the southward can be seen from this elevation, on a clear day, the Pegu waters, which empty them-

selves into the principal stream some twelve miles nearer the sea, and here and there, scattered about the landscape, we observed small, straggling native villages, and their Kyoungs, Zayats, and Pagodas. Occasionally, near these villages, were some places cleared, apparently, for cultivation; but, generally, the country appeared to have been left pretty much to itself, and was covered with tall dense jungle, or else exhibited dark plots of marsh land, on which nothing healthy seemed to grow. When the atmosphere is more than usually clear the panorama is bounded by the outlines of the distant mountains, which stretch along to the northward and eastward. The ascent to this pagoda is by no means so fatiguing as are those to the Maulmain pagodas, the acclivity not being nearly so steep, and being relieved by three separate platforms or terraces; which, during the war, were each defended by a brick and mud rampart. Each terrace was ascended by four flights of steps at different situations, viz. north, south,

east, and west; three of which, the east, south, and west flights, were covered over by elaborate wooden roofings supported by pillars. An European guard was appointed there, as we were still in some distrust as regarded the intentions of the Burmese about this quarter, having good reason to suspect that the Court of Ava was exceedingly dissatisfied with the then existing state of things, and that a sudden attack now and then was not altogether an improbable thing to happen. There could not be a better watch kept anywhere than on this Pagoda hill.

This pagoda is, I believe, considered the largest, the most important, and the most magnificent in Burmah, and also one of the oldest; and beneath its base are supposed to be deposited treasures of gold, silver, and precious stones, exceeding in quantity and value anything ever related concerning hidden wealth in eastern fable. The urns beneath the pillars of Chilmanar never surely contained half the rubies that are said to lie securely under the bricks of the Shoay

da Goung Pagoda, and the luckiest Californian gold digger would stare amazed were he to behold again exposed the rich abundance of the yellow metal which has there been buried and retained as the property of Buddh. Like all other Burmese pagodas, the pile is of solid masonry, and the design essentially the same as observed in others, although, perhaps, a little more elaborately developed. Over the top is the iron *tee*, or umbrella, richly gilt and fringed with small bells, which tinkle melodiously when stirred by the wind. The effect of the gilt spire when the sun shines full upon it is exceedingly dazzling, and, viewed from the river on a clear day, the pagoda presents a truly splendid appearance. On the north east side of the Upper Terrace was the famous bell suspended about a foot above the ground. This bell was found to measure twenty-four feet in circumference and eleven feet in height, whilst the metal of which it was composed was upwards of two feet in

thickness. The outside was covered with Burmese characters engraved upon the metal.

Most of the Buddhist temples and pagodas in the neighbourhood of Rangoon were destroyed during the war, but this stupendous structure was suffered to remain comparatively inviolate. There was something sublime in its lofty grandeur which awed the spoiler in his work of devastation, something which seemed to say, "Forbear! for to destroy would be sacrilege!" There, then, it stood, mighty in its vastness, imposing in its splendour, unmoved in the midst of carnage, looking down majestically and complacently upon the terrible progress of Death and Destruction in the plain beneath it all around; and there it stands still, an attesting monument of the strife. The numerous idols, which either grinned or looked unnaturally sentimental in shrines clustered about the spot, went the way of the buildings which sheltered them, the large ones, built of brick and plastered into form, and the middle sized ones, constructed of

wood carved, and painted or gilt; many of the smaller marble and alabaster ones lapsing into the possession of collectors of curiosities in the army;—relics which were subsequently sold or conveyed to foreign parts by the original captors. I believe, since the place was first occupied by the British, the goodly company of deities which used to sit down or lounge so quietly together in the various apartments fitted up expressly for them round about the Shoay da Goung Pagoda are (such of them as have escaped annihilation) now dispersed in a good many parts of the civilized world. There is a small group of foliage and masonry to the north westward of the Upper Terrace, and, as if rising from a number of smaller shrines, is a venerable banyan tree, whose long branches bending downwards, have again cleaved to the earth and formed another trunk.

After the proclamation of peace was made, the Government restored many of the sites of the various pagodas that had been razed during the hostilities, to the religious who formerly possessed them, and in an almost incredibly short

time, new pagodas were erected, but the treasures which had been buried beneath any of the fallen sanctuaries, were probably all removed, and the new fanes, which now stand in their places, probably cover nothing to tempt the cupidity of future conquerors.

The doctrine of the transmigration of souls forms an ingredient of the Buddhist's creed, and one effect of this strange superstition is to render its votaries singularly indifferent to the destruction of human life, even in cases in which they may be individually concerned. I was rather amused on the occasion of this visit (though a little alarmed at the same time) on observing an instance of their cool imperturbability during the progress of a scene which most people would be likely to consider as rather terrific in its nature. A large number of artisans (Burmese) were employed in gilding the lofty spire of the pagoda, for the accomplishment of which object they were mounted on a high bamboo ladder, about thirty feet broad, and some hundred and fifty in

height, very loosely constructed and not fixed as a scaffolding, the top merely resting on the spire and the feet on the ground at the base of the building. I should think there were at least a hundred workmen on this ladder at the time, busily engaged on their occupation, apparently confident in the safety of the bamboo upon which they had trusted their persons. It had, however, been raining a little while previously, and the ground beneath them had become slippery from the wet. Suddenly the feet of the treacherous ladder were seen to recede from their original position, and the destruction of the workmen above appeared imminent. Slowly slid the frail support, and the poor wretches upon it must certainly have felt that they were moving towards their doom. The world was literally slipping from beneath their feet. There were hundreds of their fellow countrymen below, gazing upon the gradually descending concourse, and awaiting the apparently inevitable result, not in breathless and fearful apprehension, but with

every demonstration of intense delight. They laughed, actually laughed uproaringly, as the bottom of the ladder neared a declivity still more greasy than the level ground around the pagoda, and not one stirred to arrest its downward progress, although but a little effort would have prevented what seemed an impending frightful sacrifice of life. Had it not been for a party of Artillerymen who had observed the affair from a distance, and who had providentially arrived at the spot in time to render assistance, every one of those unhappy men upon the ladder must have perished, with their countrymen surrounding them, laughing at the fun.

On another occasion, as myself and a friend were enjoying a morning ride by the lake side at Kemmendine, our attention was attracted by a noise which proceeded from the opposite shore. We saw a man struggling in the water, and a number of Burmese (male and female) standing by, looking on apparently unmoved by any feeling, save that of amused curiosity. No one,

judging from the attitudes of the spectators, would have thought for a moment that anything serious was the matter, especially as the sound of occasional shouts resembling laughter, was borne by the breeze across the water to where we were riding. It occurred, however, to my friend that the man in the water might possibly be in some peril, especially as he appeared to be a considerable distance from the shore. We accordingly spurred our horses on the instant, and soon reached the spot where the spectators had congregated. It was, as we conjectured might be the case. The struggling wretch was frantically endeavouring to reach terra firma, but had become exhausted by his efforts, and he sank immediately before our arrival. My friend (a good swimmer) instantly threw off his coat, plunged into the lake, made his way to the place where he had seen the drowning man disappear, and made several efforts to find him. In these unfortunately he was unsuccessful, the bottom being so foul as to render it im-

possible for him to effect his purpose. All this time the people on the bank were looking on, and repeatedly manifested their amusement at the several incidents of the scene in unequivocal bursts of merriment. My friend (a member of the Pegu Commission) rebuked them for their unseemly behaviour in pretty strong terms ; they were, however, evidently but little concerned, although they listened to his reproaches with the respect which is due to authority, and as the last act of the pleasant little comedy had terminated, they very soon dispersed.

There were no buildings as yet of any pretensions in the place, nor was the erection of any at this time commenced. So soon as the Government survey should be completed, and the plans for the new city determined on, architects and masons, and bricklayers were to be set to work. There was only one shop of any importance, a general store belonging to Messrs. Jordan and Co., and that was a large rambling edifice constructed entirely of bamboo, and thatched with

leaves, and the merchants transacted their business in temporary warehouses and offices built of wood. Divine service (according to the Anglican ritual) was performed in an old Poonghee Kyoung once on every Sunday, and the Roman Catholics had likewise a temporary place of worship.

Our holiday was soon up. During our stay the doctor and I enjoyed ourselves exceedingly, saw everything that was to be seen, and were hospitably entertained at various places. Business was resumed before the mail steamer, which was to convey us back to Maulmain, had arrived. She came at length, and our visit concluded. Charmed with the hospitality and kindness we had experienced, under circumstances so unpromising at the outset, we bade our friends good bye, and I found myself once more seated in my little library in Maulmain, spinning a voluminous, but I hope not a tedious, account of our transactions, to be thereafter communicated, gentle reader, for your information and behoof.

END OF VOL. I.

BILLING, PRINTER AND STEREOTYPEN, GUILDFORD, SURREY.

.

.

.

.





